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**“Outsiders Within”: Women’s Participation in University
Management in Kenya**

A Thesis Submitted for the Award of Doctor of Philosophy

By

Jane Kerubo Onsongo

University College London, University of London

June 2005

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Abstract

The thesis utilises some ethnographic methods and draws upon a feminist critical policy analysis to explore the participation of women managers in Kenyan universities. In order to explore these women's participation their career history in university teaching, how they got into management, the challenges they have faced and their coping strategies are examined. Their perceptions on gender roles and the impact of these perceptions on their performance as managers are also explored. The data were obtained through unstructured multiple interviews, marginal participant observation and document analysis from eight women and eight men occupying management positions at level of academic heads of department and above in one public and one private university in Kenya. Men managers were interviewed so as to shed more light on the influence of gender on the women managers' experiences. The purpose of interviewing the eight men and eight women was not to generalise their experiences to others but to be able to study the individual women managers in their natural settings in an attempt to make sense of, interpret and describe their experiences.

The analysis of the data shows that the women's participation in university management is characterised by contradictions resulting mainly from their multiple roles as academics, managers, mothers, wives; institutional discrimination and the socio-cultural attitudes towards women in leadership in the Kenyan society. These women took a longer route to management as compared to men especially in the public university and had to work extra hard to remain in management. The coping strategies adopted by the women are not geared towards changing the status quo. I argue that for women's participation in university management in Kenya to be enhanced, there is need for change of attitude towards women and gender roles in the wider Kenyan society.

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Acronyms

AAWORD: Association of African Women for Research and Development

ACU : Association of Commonwealth Universities

AMECEA : Association of Member Episcopal Conferences of Eastern Africa

CALT : Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning

CEDAW : Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women

CUEA : Catholic University of Eastern Africa

FAWE : Association of African Women Educationists

HE : Higher Education

HELB : Higher Education Loans Board

HESA : Higher Education Statistics Agency

JAB : Joint Admissions Board

KANU : Kenya African National Union

KCSE : Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education

KTN : Kenya Television Network

NARC : National Rainbow Coalition

UASU : Universities Academic Staff Union

UCL : University College London

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

UNDP : United Nations Development Programme

UK : United Kingdom

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my late father in law Pastor Stenio Onsongo Oendo who died a few months after the start of my research degree programme.

Acknowledgement

This work would not have been complete without the help I got from a number of people. To all these people I am greatly indebted. I am particularly indebted to Anne Gold, my mentor and friend, first, for encouraging me to pursue a research degree and second, for her strong advice to stay on even when things were really difficult for me. I am grateful to the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, my employer, for granting me study leave and accepting to pay my tuition fees for the duration of my research programme. I would also like to thank the Graduate School, University College London for their grant which paid part of my tuition fees and maintenance allowance. I really appreciate the financial assistance I got from the Graduate School, the Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching (CALT) and the Catholic University that enabled me to meet my fieldwork expenses in Kenya.

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I am really grateful to the women and men who found time in their busy schedules to talk to me about their experiences as managers in their universities. Although these men and women must remain anonymous, their stories form the foundation of this thesis. I thank my contact persons in the two universities without whose help I could not have accessed the men and women managers interviewed in this study.

I am greatly indebted to my family members for their love and support. Although I am truly saddened that my father in law, Pastor Stenio Onsongo, is no longer alive, I take some comfort in knowing that the completion of this work would have made him ever so proud. I truly thank my husband Francis, for *allowing* me to pursue this degree abroad and for the patience, sacrifice, encouragement and love for the duration of the programme. And to my lovely children, Edna, Edith, Eliphine and Emmanuel, who always wondered why mummy had to study far from home and yet patiently and willingly looked forward to the completion of this programme, I say *Asante Sana*. Surely without everybody's support and encouragement this thesis would have never come to fruition.

Chapter One: Background to the study

1.1 Introduction

The main purpose of this study is to explore and document the perceptions and experiences of women occupying management positions in Kenyan universities. In this chapter I set the broad context for this study by giving a brief examination of the global campaigns for gender equality in society in general and in higher education in particular. This broad context for the study includes a review of the literature on the status of women in university management in other parts of the world and in Kenya. This review shows that women are generally missing from senior management positions in universities in most countries of the world. I then summarise some of my experiences as a manager in a Kenyan university which motivated me to conduct this study. The global context and my lived experiences then lead to the main research question and some of the sub questions that this study seeks to answer. I finish the chapter with an overview of the thesis.

1.2 Global Campaigns for Gender Equality

Over the decades, issues concerning women have taken on new dimensions and received varied treatment by the United Nations and its specialised agencies. The principle of equality of men and women was first recognised in 1945 in the United Nations Charter, and subsequently in the universal declaration of human rights (1948). However, the first step towards the international recognition of equal rights for women came with the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) signed in 1979. The convention set out in a legally binding form internationally accepted principles and measures to achieve equal rights for women in all countries. CEDAW emphasises the need for equal rights for women, regardless of their marital status and in all fields, that is, political, economic, social, cultural and civil. It also called for national legislation to ban discrimination and recommended temporary special measures to speed up equality between men and women. Many countries including Kenya, however, have ratified CEDAW without

showing much evidence of genuine efforts towards compliance with the terms of the treaty (Khasiani 1993 and Nzomo 1993).

Those campaigning for gender equality in society have advanced various reasons. The majority base their campaigns on the premise that there can be no true democracy, no true people's participation in governance and development without equal participation of women and men in all spheres of life and levels of decision making. Again the goals of development may not be attained with half of the human population excluded from participation (Kameri-Mbote and Kiai 1993, UNDP 1993, Karl 1995 and World Bank 2001). For example, Kameri-Mbote and Kiai (1993) warn that:

... if the potential, ability, capability and talent of more than half of the world population is ignored or feebly integrated into the planning and implementation of national development goals then countries... stand to loose (p.8).

Elsewhere, the World Bank has identified a correlation between gender disparities and poverty in most low income countries. According to a World Bank (2001) report countries that promote women's rights and increase their access to resources and schooling have lower poverty rates, faster economic growth and less corruption than countries that do not.

Participation is used in these global campaigns to imply that women should be "involved in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the economic, social cultural and political processes that affect their lives" (Karl 1995, p.2). In this study I use women's participation in university management to mean that these women should be involved in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of university policies and programmes; and that the university structures, policies and practices should allow the women to take initiative, exercise their rights and responsibilities without intimidation or discrimination based on their gender, religion or tribe. This kind of participation is according to Gaskell et al (2004) "different from just joining the army or attending a meeting" (p.517).

International concerns about the situation of the world's women have also enhanced campaigns for more equitable distribution of the world's resources between men and women. It has been noted that in most countries of the world, women are underrepresented in public decision making and generally face discrimination and marginalisation on the basis of their gender. Karim (1995) notes that women constitute half of the world population, perform 2/3 of the world's work, and receive only 1/10 of the world's income and own less than 1% of the world's property. In education, research has shown that the literacy rate of the world's women (71.2%) is significantly lower than that of men (83.6%). According to a UNESCO World Education Report (1995) nearly 2/3 of the world's illiterate adults are women (565 million), most of whom live in Africa, Asia, and Latin America (UNESCO 1995). Sub-Saharan Africa has the lowest enrolment rates in the world at all levels of education for men and women with female rates being lower (UNESCO 1996).

International campaigns for gender equality have contributed to creating awareness of the injustices committed against women and their underrepresentation in public decision making in society in general. However, depending on particular national histories, institutional politics these international conventions and treaties are not incorporated into national development plans and legal frameworks. Stromquit (1998) observes that declarations enacted at international forums are "not legally binding and as a result there is very little that is done in national contexts to correct the injustices committed against women" (p.32). In relation to Africa Mama (2002) attributes lack of implementation of these international declarations to the authoritarian and anti-democratic regimes that sometimes use gender equality issues as a public relations exercise. Mama (ibid) observes that these governments often sign and ratify United Nations Conventions to get donor funding but they do not implement them. This is possibly the reason why there are no laws enacted in Kenya to protect women against discrimination (see section 2.3.3).

1.3 Campaigns for Gender Equality in Higher Education Management

Global gender equality campaigns have been an important vehicle for encouraging the increased recruitment of women as students and staff into higher education. The Platform for Action and the Beijing Declaration (1995) identifies education as very important in the realisation of equality. It declares:

Education is a human right and an essential tool for achieving the goals of equality, development and peace. Non-discriminatory education...ultimately contributes to more equal relationships between women and men. Equality of educational qualifications is necessary if more women are to become agents of change...investing in ...education and training for girls and women...has proved to be one of the best means of achieving sustainable development and economic growth that is both sustained and sustainable (Quoted in Wanjama 1996, p.2).

In attempts to widen access to education for women a number of international conventions have been signed. The most influential ones include the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), which has been followed by conferences such as, World Conference on Education for All (1990), World Conference on Human Rights (1993), International Conference on Population and Development (1994), the World summit for Social Development (1995) and Jomtien Declaration on Education for All (1990) among others (UNESCO World Education Report 1995).

There have been specific campaigns to have more women participate in higher education management. The international conference on women managers in education held in Bristol in 1993 (Ruijis 1993) identified three main reasons why women should be incorporated in educational management. The first reason is that it is a matter of justice that women should be able to realise their full potential in any sector of society. The second reason is that in the education sector, which employs a great number of women, it would be a waste of skills and talents not to appoint women to leadership positions. The last reason is that women have a positive

contribution to make to education management in terms of management styles (p. 522).

In addition to the three reasons identified by Ruijis (1993) some campaigners for increased participation of women in higher education management argue that the status of women as students, academics and managers is unlikely to change for the better if there are no women leaders on campus to push for women's agenda. For example, Chrisler et al (1998, p. 200) argue that "it is essential to have women in university committees" in order to improve women's general welfare on campus.

In 1998, UNESCO convened a World Conference on Higher Education, at which a panel of experts reviewed the progress made in gender equality in higher education since the Beijing Conference (1995). The participants at the World Conference on Higher Education (ibid) underscored the role of higher education in the enhancement of women's participation in the sector. Article 4 of the World Declaration on Higher Education for the 21st Century (1998a) called for the elimination of all gender stereotyping in higher education at all levels and in all disciplines in which women are underrepresented. Women's active involvement in decision-making in higher education was emphasised. The participants at the UNESCO conference recommended that by the year 2010, university chairs, professors, and heads of department posts should be filled by men and women on equal basis (UNESCO 1998a).

At the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education (1998b) the conference declaration and action plan on higher education in Africa underscored the need for international organisations, African states and higher education institutions to develop policies geared towards promoting the participation of women as students, teachers and decision makers in higher education in Africa (UNESCO 1998b). However, a meeting of higher education partners organised in 2003 to assess the progress made in the African region since the UNSECO 1998 conference revealed that there had

not been any marked improvement in the participation of women in higher education management (UNESCO 2003).

Despite the international campaigns for gender equality in higher education, studies conducted in several countries, UK (Brooks 1997, Morley 1997 and Bagihole 2003) North America (Glazer-Raymo 1999, and Walton 1997) Canada (Acker and Feuerverger 1997, Bond 2003 and Acker 2003) Australia (Illing 1998, Blackmore and Sachi 2001, Bacchi 2001 and Currie and Thiele 2001) Uganda (Kasente 1995 and Kwesiga 2002), Kenya (Nzomo 1995, Lodiaga and Mbevi 1995, Kanake 1997, Many 2000, Kamau 2001, Karega 2001 and Onsongo 2002) South Africa (De la Rey 1998 and Mabokela 2003) Nigeria (Odejide 2003) and across the commonwealth (Lund 1998 and Singh 2002) continue to show that women are underrepresented in the management of universities.

Two Commonwealth Higher Education Management Service survey reports (Lund 1998 and Singh 2002) revealed that across the Commonwealth the percentage of women employed as full-time academic staff ranges from 9.5% in Ghana, to just over 50% in Jamaica. The Commonwealth average was 24%. In management, women were found to be invisible in senior management positions. Of the 35 countries surveyed, 27 countries reported only male vice-chancellors and overall 8.3% (50 of 600) women were chief executives of Commonwealth universities. Of the ten countries with only one university, only two reported women vice chancellors. By 2002 those low income countries of the Commonwealth with a large number of universities, like India had 7.2% (10 of 138) and Nigeria (1 of 34). Pakistan with 33 universities had no woman vice chancellor. In the high income countries of the Commonwealth, Australia had the highest with 18.6% (8 of 43), Canada had 18.4% (16 of 87), New Zealand had no woman vice chancellor. The UK, which had the most universities, had 8.9% (12 of 135).

Women in these ACU surveys were found to be occupying such positions as registrars, librarians or heads of personnel rather than vice-chancellors or their deputies or directors of finance or even deans of faculties. What is

surprising, however, about the Commonwealth surveys, is that even where women form a large proportion of professors and associate professors they were not appointed to chief executive positions. For example, in the Asian countries such as Malaysia, Hong Kong and Singapore where women formed a good proportion of professors, the survey found that there was no single woman vice chancellor. It was observed in these surveys that there were slightly more women in the high income Commonwealth countries engaged in senior management (Pro-vice-chancellor, deputy vice-chancellors, deputy presidents, and dean of students, librarian and chair of committees) than in the low income countries. However, the statistics from some countries like the UK still reflected gender disparities in the management of commonwealth universities. The surveys also found that the proportion of women decreased significantly along the academic ladder. The majority of the women were clustered at the rank of lecturer, with only 9.9 % at the rank of professor. The statistics of these surveys are summarised in the Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of men and women by occupation category in Commonwealth universities in 1997-2000

Position	1997			2000		
	Women	as %	Total	Women	as %	Total
VCs	50	8.3	600	54	9.0	602
DVCs	NA	NA	NA	329	19.8	1664
Heads of Admin	96	18.8	511	79	14.9	531
Finance Officers	34	10.1	337	45	12.0	374
Deans	238	13.0	1827	308	14.3	2160
Heads/Directors	1234	15.2	8123	2686	17.9	15017
Librarian	108	36.5	296	126	37.2	339

Source: Adapted from Singh, J. K. (2002): Still a Single Sex Profession: Female Staff Numbers in Commonwealth Universities pp. 7-17.

The data in Table 1 shows that management in higher education is basically a masculine activity. Women do not occupy positions that can enable them to influence the policies and direction of their institutions, both at the departmental and at institutional levels (Singh 2002). It appears therefore that women in the

Commonwealth universities tend to be engaged in support, nurturing and caring services in the universities as opposed to decision making.

Studies done in individual countries increasingly point to the continued underrepresentation of women in senior academic and management positions. In the UK, despite the widespread introduction of equal opportunities policies in HE, women have not been notably more successful in reaching senior posts than in others sectors of the labour market (Farish, et al 1995, Powney 1997, Bagihole 2003 and Morley 1999). In the year 2001 it was estimated that the UK's 114 universities employed over 300,000 people of whom over 130,000 comprised of academic staff. Women comprised only 35% of all UK academic staff (HESA 2002). Figures from the UK in March 2004 showed that of the 170 heads of higher education institutions- which include universities as well as specialist colleges only 13% are women, while there are only 10 women vice-chancellors of universities, 8% of the total. This figure had dropped from 8.9% (12 of 135) reported in 2000 (Singh 2002, p.9) Giving the Barbara Diamond memorial lecture held each year on the issue of women and equality at the University of Westminster in London in March, 2004 the chief executive of Universities in the UK, Lady Warwick warned that there were negative knock-on effects for public life if higher education continued to be perceived as a male dominated culture with limited opportunities and challenges for women (The Guardian Newspapers March 17, 2004).

Studies done in Kenya (Lodiaga and Mbevi 1995, Nzomo 1995, Kanake 1997, Kamau 2001, Karega, 2001, and Onsongo 2002), Tanzania (Masanja et al 2001) and Nigeria (Olojede 1993 and Odejide 2003) all point to the dismal numbers of women in universities both as academics and managers. For example, a survey I conducted in Kenya showed that women are under-represented in the decision making organs of the university (Onsongo 2002). The status of women in Kenyan university management is summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Positions women occupy in university management as at July 2002 in 10 Kenyan Universities (6 public and 4 private)

Position	M	F	Total
Vice Chancellor	9	1	10
Deputy Vice-chancellor	21	3	24
Registrar	16	3	19
Finance officer	10	0	10
Principal	7	2	9
Director of institute	44	19	63
Dean of Students	5	3	8
Librarian	8	2	10
*Human Resource	2	1	3
Council chair	10	0	10
Dean of Faculty	49	6	55
Head of department	243	52	295
** Council members	119	18	137
Total	543	110	653

Source: Compiled from university calendars and staff lists of the surveyed universities.

Key

*Human resource managers in 3 private universities

** Council members for 5 public universities

The data in Table 2 show that in both public and private universities women occupy a small percentage (20.2%) of the senior management positions of the universities surveyed. A further analysis of the data also showed that women tended to be in the traditionally feminine areas such as dean of home economics, director of catering, and director of the gender institutes and headed departments such as food and nutrition, languages, history, religious studies and student affairs.

The poor representation of women in universities both as academics and managers has led to questions being raised about the nature of these institutions that make them hostile to women. For example, Kearney (2000) argues that with the increased participation of women in higher education in some countries (as academics and students) researchers should seek answers to questions such as:

- Why are attitudes towards gender equity not changing fast enough?
- Why are women prevented from participating fully in decision-making?

- How does this inequality impact on the challenges facing the higher education sector? (p.2).

The questions posed by Kearney (ibid) call for a critical analysis of the socio-cultural traditions and organisation cultures of universities in various contexts that continue to impede women's career advancement once in universities. Edwards (2000) supports this kind of research and adds that institutional cultures where women work need a critical analysis. This study is a response to the call by Kearney and Edwards.

Some research has been done (mainly in the UK, USA, Australia and also South Africa) to document women's experience as managers and academics in universities. The term "*chilly climate*" has been used to describe women's experience of university culture (Sandler and Hall 1986, Sandler 1992, 1993 and Ramsay 1995). Ramsay (1995) identifies the chilly climate in universities as the:

...apparently harmless, neutral and long sanctioned actions and activities which are themselves embedded in the institutional climate and which collectively make up its culture (p.92).

In addition to the *chilly climate* other women managers' experiences have been found to include emotional pressure and isolation, high workload, work related stress, juggling between personal and professional roles, overt and covert discrimination, sexual harassment and career stagnation (Davidson and Cooper 1992, Brooks 1995, Deem and Ozga 1997, Morley 1999, Wyn & Acker 2000, Raddon 2002, Neal 2003, Wallace 2003, Wolf-Wendel and Ward 2003, Armenti 2004 and Acker and Armenti 2004). These studies on the experiences of women managers in organisations and in higher education management shed some light on how women managers experience higher education management. However, most of these studies have been carried outside Kenya. I conducted this study to explore the experiences of women managers in the Kenyan context.

1.4 My experiences as a woman manager.

In this section I describe some of my experiences as a manager that have contributed to my interest in the participation of women in university management. The purpose of telling my story is mainly methodological. It is important for me to reflect upon my own location within the research and in relation to the researched. This reflection will make me aware of how the stories women managers narrate and my interpretation of them will be influenced by my experiences, beliefs, theoretical framework and the ways in which the interviewees position me within the research process (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002, Clandinin & Connelly 2000, Coate 1999, Harding 1997 and Miller 1995). Clandinin & Connelly (2000) observe that the researcher's own experience is central in the research process because:

...as we compose our narrative beginnings, we also work within the three dimensional space, telling stories of our past that frame our present standpoints, moving back and forth from the personal to the social, and situating it all in place... These narrative beginnings of our own livings, tellings, retellings, and relivings help us deal with questions of who we are in the field and who we are in the texts that we write on our experience of the field experience (p. 70).

I am a Kenyan woman in my late thirties. I am married with young children. My professional background is in teaching having acquired a Bachelors and a Masters degree in Education. I began university teaching in August 1997 after teaching in Kenyan secondary schools for about six years. I teach in a Catholic sponsored university in Kenya, which has been in existence for over a decade. At the time of this study the university had a student population of about 3,000 and four faculties. I got the university job after teaching part-time for one academic year. On taking up my full time teaching appointment, I found that I had also been appointed to a management position. Prior to this appointment I had not held any management position. I became nervous and anxious because I was not sure whether I could be capable of doing the job. My anxiety was heightened by the fact that apart from the job description contained in my letter of appointment, there was no induction given to me. So, like some of the women and men interviewed in this study, I

joined university management without any preparation or induction but I was still expected to do the work.

The appointment was to prove very beneficial later on in my career advancement. It was on the basis of my management position that I was later nominated for the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) Scholarship for women managers in low income countries in September 1999. I was the only woman holding a management position at the university when these scholarships were advertised. The scholarship enabled me to study for a Masters Degree in Women and Management in Higher Education at the Institute of Education, University of London. On completion of the MA I went back to my institution and continued with my teaching and management responsibilities. I was surprised that there was no promotion, given that I had acquired more training and skills. The MA was an eye opener on gender issues in higher education and has greatly contributed to my interest in women's participation in higher education management. It is also on the basis of this MA that I was admitted for a research degree at the University College London. After the MA I started to examine my experiences as a woman in higher education management from a feminist perspective.

In my short time as a manager I have experienced discrimination because of being a woman. The fact that I am a woman has determined the meetings I attend, the decisions for which I am consulted and the respect I get from the people I manage. At times my gender has denied me access to some of the responsibilities, which my management position entitles me to. For example, there was a graduation ceremony at which I was supposed to present the names of students for the conferment of degrees and diplomas in my role as the head of department. I attended the rehearsals and was well prepared for the task. However, on the graduation day when my turn came to read the names, a male colleague stood and read the names. Nobody had informed me of the change in the programme and nobody bothered to explain to me afterwards why this had happened. I learnt from the grapevine that this was

done because it is against the tradition of the church for a woman to stand in front of the archbishop (Chancellor).

As a woman manager I have also experienced lack of cooperation from senior male colleagues who refuse to recognise my management responsibility over them. For example, they refuse to perform their professional responsibilities or sometimes they do their work badly with the intention of blaming or making me appear incompetent to the university authorities. I have also witnessed qualified women being denied opportunities to hold management positions. An incident occurred within my university that made me question the extent to which laid down policies on appointment of managers are followed. A woman who I considered highly qualified academically and professionally (with a PhD and 10 years university teaching experience) won an election by an overwhelming majority to an elective management position. Upon receiving the results the university administration nullified the election without any justification. After some time the woman was forced to quit her job due to career stagnation.

I must confess that before encountering feminist theory I never saw these experiences as having a gender dimension. Initially I used to blame myself for failing to do my work properly. My experiences as a manager in a university, previous research and my participation in workshops, seminars and international conferences on gender equality in higher education have made me come to the conclusion that women managers experience university management differently from men. There are gender stereotypes in the Kenyan society that have made it hard for some men to accept women as equal partners in decision making (Kanake 1997 and Onsongo 2002). In some cases women are put in a position of management to test them so as to fail them; and even when women do a good job, credit sometimes goes to the men they are working under as deputies (Ramsay 1995 and Powney 1997).

Some of the experiences I describe here can easily be taken as isolated and specific to my university because of the fact that it is private and Catholic sponsored institution. However, I was surprised to find out in the literature (mainly in western countries) and my conversations with other women managers how my experiences are reflective of wide spread gender discrimination against women in educational institutions (Packer 1995, Walker 1997, Brooks 1995, 1997, Powney 1997, Morley 1999 and Makobela 2003).

These experiences have caused my academic and professional interest in the participation of women in universities, both as academics and managers, to rise. However, my experiences and some of the conclusions I have drawn based on them had not been supported by research evidence from Kenya. So, it is against this background that I decided to focus on the experiences of women managers in other Kenyan universities in this study.

1.5 Research Question

After surveying the literature on women's participation in higher education management, attending conferences on gender equality in higher education (see section 5.3.2) and conducting a pilot study (see section 5.3.1) and my own experiences as a woman manager (see section 1.4), the main research question that this study seeks to answer is: **What are the experiences of women managers in Kenyan universities?** Experience is used in this context to refer to "the life world as it is lived, felt, undergone, made sense of and accomplished by the women managers" (Schwandt 2001, p.84). I decided to focus on women managers' experiences for two main reasons. First, it has been observed that inadequate publicity of the areas women find problematic at the university level, both as academics and managers, and the absence of systematically documented gender desegregated data, especially in the African context, have partly hindered the development and implementation of programmes to correct the gender disparities in most African universities (UNESCO 1998a, 1998b; FAWE 2001 and Mabokela 2003). Mabokela (ibid) observes that it is important to gain insights into

women managers' experiences in order to inform the process of creating institutional environments that are supportive of their professional endeavours. Second, focusing on women managers' experiences represents an attempt to rectify their neglect in the educational management literature, as well as allow for the possibility of constructing an alternative picture of university management, based on women's experiences (Hall 1996).

In an attempt to answer the main research question, I explore these women's experiences using the following sub questions:

- How did these women get into management positions?
- What are the perceived challenges and how do they overcome them?
- What are the women's perceptions of their gender roles and how do these perceptions affect their performance as managers and their career advancement in universities?
- Are women managers' experiences different from men managers?

To answer these questions I interviewed eight women and eight men occupying management positions at the level of academic heads of department and above and held informal discussions with other managers, academics and support staff in one public and one private university in Kenyan between January and July 2004. The inclusion of men in the study was motivated by the advice given by Hearn (2001) who points out that:

...women's position and experience in university and the other organisations is clearly affected by the form and structure of management. To change women's position in universities and the gendered cultures of universities necessitates changing men and men's position in universities and their cultures. Transforming women's position and power in universities may be assisted by critical studies of men and management (p.70).

For the purposes of maintaining confidentiality and anonymity of the interviewees, the two universities will be from now hence forth referred to as *the public* and *the private* university respectively. Again for the same reasons the names of the men and women managers interviewed have been changed.

1.6 Overview of the thesis

The structure of this thesis is influenced largely by the fact that the study was carried out in Kenya and the thesis written and submitted for examination in England. This implies that there were two audiences or types of readers. The readership of this thesis had implications on how the information or content of the thesis is structured. For example, because of the English/ international audience/ readership a detailed account of the political, social, educational and economic context of the study is included. This information is considered necessary for the understanding of the women's experiences.

In presenting the findings for this study I use theory to explore, explain and interpret the data and the data to explore and explain the theory. For this reason I do not include a separate review of the literature on which I draw. Instead, the literature, primarily the one associated with feminist critical policy analysis of women's participation in higher education management is embedded into the arguments that run through the thesis. Again because of the paucity of research related to my research question in Africa in general and in Kenya in particular, I draw mainly on literature based outside this region.

In this first chapter I have outlined the global, theoretical and personal contexts through which the remainder of the thesis is produced. In outlining the global context of the study I have shown that indeed there have been increased campaigns for gender equality in society in general and in higher education management in particular. These campaigns have resulted from the realisation that women who form a majority of most countries adult populations are excluded from participating in affairs that affect them. I have also shown that despite the increased global campaigns for gender equality in higher education, studies conducted in many countries continue to show that women occupy junior ranks in organisations, especially in universities, both in low income and high income countries. The status of women in university management calls for more research in this area to find out why

attitudes towards gender equality are changing at a slow pace. This forms my justification for the current study. I have also described how my experiences as a woman manager in a Kenyan university contribute to the choice of my research question.

In chapter two I describe the economic, political and social aspects of the Kenyan society during the precolonial, colonial and postcolonial eras with the intention of showing how women were and continue to be positioned in these contexts. I focus on the gender roles during these periods because the perceptions of these roles have continued to influence the participation of women in the public decision making process in the Kenyan society.

In chapter three I set out the policy framework of the study by examining the management structure and the policies and practices governing the appointment of university managers in Kenya. In chapter four I explore the theoretical framework underpinning this research. I give a brief definition of feminism and explain why I chose a feminist perspective as a framework to explore the experiences of the women managers. I discuss Postcolonial, Christian, African feminism and feminist critical policy analysis and show how I used them in the analysis of the data obtained for the study.

Chapter five outlines the research methods used to obtain data for the study. The access to interviewees and the particular difficulties experienced in using the interview techniques (e.g. gaining the trust of the interviewees to tape the interviews) are examined. I also reflect on the ethical concerns that characterised the data production process such as my relationship with the interviewees including questions of power and issues of confidentiality and anonymity. In chapter six I draw on the ethnographic data to discuss how the women got access into management positions in their universities. The personal and professional attributes that the women managers thought would have contributed to their career success and ascension into management are also discussed.

Chapter seven examines the challenges the women faced as managers in their universities. Some of the challenges discussed include inadequate training or orientation, work overload, balancing academic and management responsibilities and juggling personal and professional responsibilities. Chapter eight reports on the gender discrimination experienced by the women managers. The effects and implications of this discrimination on the women managers' performance of their responsibilities are examined. The women's perceptions of their gender roles and the effects of these perceptions on their career advancement are also explored. In chapter nine some of the strategies used by the women in this study to overcome the challenges they faced are examined. The strategies discussed include working extra hard, soliciting for family support, separating personal roles from professional roles, using househelps and relying on God. Chapter ten provides a conclusion to the thesis by identifying the complexities and contradictions characterising the women managers' experiences. I also make suggestions for policy considerations and reflect on the contribution of this study to my career as a woman manager and the on going debate on the participation of women in university management.

Chapter Two: Situating the Study: The Context

2.1 Introduction

The women managers' experiences explored in this study have to be understood within the light of their wider social, economic and political contexts. As individuals, they cannot be separated from the society and culture in which they work. Each woman's behaviour and experience is mediated through the national and local context for leadership as well as their individual history and predisposition. To understand gender relations in Kenya today one has to look at the traditional Kenyan culture, Christianity, colonialism and the political, socio-cultural and legal frameworks characterising the postcolonial Kenyan society. I begin this chapter by giving a brief history of Kenya. I then go on to examine the gender roles in the precolonial and colonial Kenyan society in order to show how the status of women was significantly changed by the colonial experience. I finish the chapter with a discussion of how gender roles in the postcolonial Kenyan society have continued to position women differently from men.

2.2 Economic, Social and Political Context

Kenya is situated along the Equator, on the eastern coast of the African continent. Its neighbours are Somalia and Ethiopia to the north, Sudan to the northwest, Tanzania to the south and Uganda to the west. Kenya has a population of about 30 million people. Women constitute over 52% of Kenya's population. Kenya's population is overwhelmingly (97%) comprised of people of African descent. The majority (78%) of Kenyans are Christians. The remaining comprise Muslims (10%), Indigenous religions (10%) and others (2%) (Government of Kenya 2002). The national language is Swahili. English is the official language and medium of instruction in schools. There are other several languages spoken by the different tribes in Kenya.

Kenya is a country of great economic and social variation between geographical regions and among income groups. Over half of the country's population lives beneath the poverty line. Overall the national incidence of poverty stood at 56% in 2001. The gap between the rich and the poor is very big. 52.5% of Kenyan men in the rural areas and 49.2% of those in the urban areas live beneath the poverty line. In both instances the statistics for women are higher as 54.1% of rural and 63.0% of urban women and girls live beneath the poverty line. At the national level women only own 1% of the registered land and yet they form 75% of the agricultural labour force (Government of Kenya 2003, 2002 and 1994).

There are approximately forty to sixty different groups of people in Kenya. Each group has its own tradition and history, language and dialect, territory, religion and beliefs. The various customs, traditions and religious values of the different tribes have been instrumental in determining the roles men and women play in society. These groups are described as tribes or ethnic groups. In the Kenyan society, tribes or ethnic groups occupy the same geographical region. Among the dominant tribes are the Kikuyu, Kamba, Gusii, Luhya, Kalenjin and Luo (Omolo 2002).

In most Kenyan tribes marriage is compulsory. The custom of presenting a gift to the bride's people during marriage is widely practised. Different names are used to describe it, such as bridewealth, bride-gift, bride price and dowry. There are three types of marriages practiced in the Kenyan society: customary, civil and religious (Christianity, Hindu, and Islam). There is no legal requirement that all marriages be registered. Customary marriage is potentially polygamous and it influences all the other forms of marriage because failure to pay bridewealth (customary practice) is enough reason to stop a church wedding as this will make parents of the bride not to give consent to the marriage. Under African customary law, women have no property rights in marriage (World Bank 2003).

In all Kenyan tribes inheritance is patrilineal, succession being through the male line from father to son, usually the oldest. The son inherits both the position occupied by the father during his lifetime, and his property. If there is no son, a daughter cannot inherit, instead the deceased nearest male relative (brother, nephew) will be made heir. The patrilineal system and the requirement to continue one's lineage place more importance, value and responsibility on the male than the female child. Many times the birth of a girl child is not celebrated as that of a boy. A woman who gives birth to daughters only is not respected and the husband can take on another wife who might bear him sons (Khasiani 1993).

Kenya gained independence from Britain in 1963. At independence the government was based on a liberal democratic constitutional dispensation, which emphasised plural politics, the rule of law and the sanctity of private property. After independence the government faced political opposition in the formative years due to tribal unrest, particularly against the Kikuyu and Luo tribes whose members held powerful positions in the government. To stop opposition, the government banned all political parties other than the dominant Kenya African National Union (KANU). In essence Kenya became a dictatorship. After six years of independence democracy was dismantled and tribalism engraved in the political process (Omolo 2002).

During the one party dictatorship (1969-1991) women who tried to campaign for women's rights or run for public offices were harassed and no women's organisations were allowed. Demonstrations of any form against the government were met with violent opposition from the police (Oduol and Kabira 2000).

The process of democratisation in Kenya began 1991 when western countries withheld foreign aid to the country for perceived human rights abuses and rampant corruption in government. The withholding of foreign aid made the regime to relent to the demands for multiparty democracy. Local unrest and international pressure saw the first and the

second multiparty elections held in Kenya in December 1992 and December 1997 respectively. In these two elections the ruling party Kenya African National Union (KANU) won (Omolo 2002). In the run up to the third multiparty elections in 2002 about 14 political parties in the opposition came together and formed the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC). They signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in order to remove KANU, which had ruled Kenyan since independence from power. This coalition of parties saw the defeat of KANU in December 2002 (Nzomo 2003).

With the introduction of multiparty politics, some women have begun to question and challenge some of the traditions and customs that undermine the role of women in society. Some of the organisations spearheading the women's course in Kenya include; National Committee on the Status of Women (NCSW), Women's Voters League, Mothers in Action, Federation of Women Lawyers-Kenya Chapter (FIDA) and the National Council of Women in Kenya among others (Oduol 1993, p.31).

2.3 Gender Roles in the Kenyan Society.

In the following sections I describe the gender roles in the traditional, colonial and modern Kenyan society. The aim of this description is to show how women have been and continue to be positioned in these various contexts.

2.3.1 Gender roles in the Precolonial Kenyan Society

The sexual division of labour, which existed in the traditional Kenyan society, differed from one tribe to another. In most tribes, men and women performed separate roles, enjoying the recognition that came with success in for example, hunting or food production. On the whole both men and women had obligations to fulfil, governed by specific customs (Barngetuny 1999 and Omwoyo 1991, 2002). .

Describing the labour organisation of one of the tribes in Kenya during the pre-colonial period Omwoyo (1991) writes that:

Division of labour was influenced by societal norms that predetermined different tasks for various ages and sex. Hunting, for example, was for the young boys and men. The clearing of fields was work for men. Specifically initiated young men did herding of livestock; though near the homestead boys and girls could herd a few calves and goats. Women were entrusted with cooking, cultivation, weeding, fetching water, and looking for vegetables and a host of other domestic chores. Their children helped them with cultivation. Men did the building and thatching of houses, while women mudded the floors and plastered the walls (p. 73).

However, in spite of this sexual division of labour described above the allocation of labour tasks was not rigid among most tribes. There were some overlaps in accordance with the physical strenuousness of the particular task. For example, the designated roles for men in agriculture were not rigidly maintained. When necessary, men performed or assisted in activities normally ascribed to women (Barnes 1976 and Coquery-Vidrovitch 1997).

Socially women's place was always in the home as well as in the fields, but their role in these spheres was often paramount. In some tribes, like the Kikuyu, women in pre-colonial Kenya also exercised political authority as chiefs and clan elders (Mutindi -Mumbua 2001). In most tribes, women held religious and leadership responsibilities as well. For example, there were women mediums (communicated with the living dead and spirits), seers (saw certain things not easily known to other people), ritual elders (in charge of communal rites, ceremonies, weddings, settlement of disputes, cleansing rituals and the upkeep of shrines, sacred objects and sacred places), rainmakers (prayed for rain in times of drought or an end to floods) and priests (looked after shrines and sacred groves and other religious places) (Oduol 1993, Wamue 1999 and James 2004). These leadership and religious responsibilities enabled women in the traditional Kenyan society to enjoyed high status and reverence. Older women in all tribes were revered and held in high esteem. They were often selected to serve as heads of extended families and other kinship networks (Mbiti 1969).

An important feature of the pre-colonial societies was the fact that it was only through marriage that a woman gained recognition in the society (Abagi 1997, Hakansson and LeVine 1997 and Nyang'era 1999). Nyang'era (1999) writing about the importance attached to marriage among the Gusii of Western Kenya (my tribe) notes that the legal implications attached to the unmarried women was that they suffered a lot of stigmas. The society took them to be incomplete. They were very much not respected. The payment of dowry constituted the key to getting access to land for the wife. The wife gained managerial and user rights to her husband's land, the right of maintenance for her self and her children as well as the right for her sons to become legal heirs to the land allocated to her (Otoigo 1996). Upon payment of dowry the husband gained rights to his wife as a domestic worker and bearer and nurturer of children. As he became the owner of his wife, he also became the owner of the children he fathers.

Although women did not enjoy the same social status as men, they were perceived as major contributors to the maintenance of the society (Wamue 1999). Customary laws such as those regarding rights to use the land protected their role as producers and distributors of goods and services. Women were also supported as traders (Midamba 1990). The classification of roles in the traditional Kenyan society was based on the prevailing beliefs that each sex had an important role to play in the community. The roles performed by men and women therefore complemented each other. Oduol (1993) observes that "Women's involvement in different activities in the traditional Kenyan society did not make them any less important or accord them lower status than men" (p .25)

2.3.2 Gender roles during the colonial period

Kenya became a British colony in 1890. The status of women in the traditional Kenyan society was significantly changed with the coming of colonialists to Kenya (Hollander 1979, Midamba 1990 and Kamari-Mbote and Kiai 1993). Several strategies were used by the colonial state

to undermine the status of women. First, vast tracts of Kenya's most fertile land were taken from Africans to make way for the colonists' farms and estates. As a result, entire populations were evicted from their ancestral lands and forcibly resettled in crowded reserves or protected villages on inferior land. During and after colonisation communal, clan based property was eroded as colonial authorities introduced the titling system. The titling system recognised men's right to allocation of land for agricultural use. The Land title deeds were in men's names. Men could now sell land without clan approval. Women's right to use land did not receive legal recognition (Midamba 1990).

Second, old traditions such as rites and rituals connected to remembrance were abolished on the grounds of their being pagan or satanic; the way of dressing was changed to accord with European ideas of decency. The colonists used Christianity to create an African elite, which served the colonial administration in the form of clerks, policemen and minor officials. Christianity was also used as a pacifying influence, through which it was hoped that natives would recognise the moral superiority of the colonists, and not oppose them. The values of Christianity introduced by missionaries preached the inferiority of women. The missionaries also interfered with the African concept of family. For example, some missionaries denounced polygamous marriages as evil. On becoming Christians, most men would be asked to leave all their wives and marry a Christian wife or to choose one of the wives and abandon the others. On their part, women who were in polygamous unions and wished to be Christians were asked to leave their husbands (James 2004 and Wamue 1999).

The missionary approach to religious matters affected the whole indigenous religious process and social set up. Women were most affected by this disruption (James 2004). The misconception that Christian missionaries had about women's role in the religion of the various tribes in the traditional society (mediums, seers, rainmakers, ritual elders and priests) led them to refer to such women as demons.

African women traditional healers were called to repent and to denounce their vocations in order to become Christians. Thus African women who converted to Christianity lost their religious and spiritual leadership roles because western Christianity barred women from priesthood and public teaching (Wamue 1999 and Nasimiyu 1990). Christianity, for example, has continued to reinforce the subordination of women in the modern Kenyan society by preaching subordination of women (See section 9.2.6). The teachings of the Bible are sometimes used to reinforce the subordinate status of women in society (Okemwa 2002).

Third, the penetration of colonial capitalism threw the pre-colonial economy in the Kenyan society into disequilibrium. The colonialists first sought natural resources for their industries. To generate these resources they introduced cash crop farming to replace the traditional subsistence farming. They also developed urban capitalist enterprises which required waged labour. As a result of these changes men became wage earners on colonialist farms or worked in industries in urban areas and women's traditional subsistence gardens or gathering grounds were shoved to the margins (Midamba 1990). Moreover, the colonialists believed that cultivation was a job suited more for men than women. Thus female farming was replaced by male farming (Kameri- Mbote and Kiai 1993). Again with the introduction of a monetary economy, the barter trade practised in the traditional society was abolished. In order to pay taxes and be able to buy European manufactured goods the Kenyan people had three options; produce surplus commodities for sale, sell their animals and offer their labour for wages. The last option seemed to be the one taken by many (Lovett 1989).

Fourth, the unity of tribal societies was deliberately undermined by the British so as to weaken any opposition to the colonial regime. Whereas previously, societies were governed on local level first, in the family, then the extended family, then the clan, and ultimately the tribe, the dominant ideology under colonial rule was based on white ethnicity in which colonial administrators and settlers enjoyed political and

economic advantages over the majority black African population. Within the African communities, colonial rule patterned a “*divide and rule*” policy in which some communities were privileged over others especially with regard to access to modern economic processes that accompanied colonialism. The divide and rule policy during colonialism greatly contributed to the creation of tribal animosity and regional differences in economic development witnessed in Kenya today (Omolo 2002, p.210).

The fifth strategy used by colonialists to undermine the status of women is maintenance of a dichotomy between the private and the public spheres of life. During colonialism men were drawn into the public sphere whereas women’s participation was limited to the private sphere. With the introduction of emigrant labour where men had to move out and work far from home, women’s tasks increased in difficulty and intensity (Kameri- Mbote and Kiai 1993). Again, during the colonial period husbands were identified as the only breadwinners and heads of households. The breadwinner concept was based on the assumption that men’s wages would be sufficient to support their families. Therefore, education and employment opportunities were preserved for men. However, because the men’s wages were not sufficient to support their families, women were often forced to carry out extra work such as traditional beer brewing or hiring themselves out as casual labourers, on neighbouring farms in addition to their other domestic responsibilities in order to meet household financial needs (Njiro 1993). In the long run women found themselves systematically excluded from public participation in the new colonial set up (Oduol 1993).

Lastly the introduction of formal education during colonialism affected women’s status in various ways. In the beginning female education was neglected by the missionaries and the colonial government since girls and women were never going to be evangelists or tutors. Even when girls were incorporated in the formal education they were exposed to a different curriculum from boys. While all were taught catechism as a

condition for baptism, the curricula for boys included commerce, dispensing medicine, carpentry, mechanics and clerical work in addition to reading and writing. This kind of education was geared towards developing men who could assist in missionary activities. On the other hand, the curricula for girls included home management, nursing, nutrition and childcare. Girls were only prepared to be good wives to the male elites particularly the evangelists (Wamue 1999).

Colonialism had far reaching effects on Kenya's economic, social, political organisation (Kinuthia 1993). Some of the effects continue to be felt up to this day. Colonial laws interfered with women's roles in the traditional society thereby disrupting and displacing them through the introduction of cash crops, formal education and monetary economy. Women were affected in four major ways. First, women's traditional land user rights were wiped out. The individualisation of land during the colonial period denied women opportunities to participate in market farming and subsistence agriculture. Muragu (1998) observes that land registration during the colonial period rested absolute ownership and control in the hands of men thus making women dependent on men.

Second, women's economic status was seriously undermined. During the colonial period economic status was achieved and maintained through cash cropping and formal education. Women were excluded from these two sectors. Third, colonialists classified work into paid and unpaid, formal and informal sectors. This classification left women's roles in the category of unpaid and informal sectors. This led to further marginalisation and subordination of women in society. Lastly, urbanisation resulting from the cash economy and emigrant labour during colonialism led to male emigration from the rural to urban areas with the rural areas increasingly being dominated by female headed households. The colonial state policies limited and controlled women's ability to migrate and work in urban areas.

On the whole, in both domestic and economic spheres, colonialism distorted the gender roles in the Kenyan society by increasing the workload for women relative to men and creating the social dynamics of individualism, which clashed with the traditional communal arrangement (Hollander 1979). Colonialism undermined the status of women through the application of religious beliefs, laws and perceptions of gender roles for men and women. On the one hand there was the establishment of a cash economy, in which the colonies became only producers of raw materials for the industrial development of the colonisers country. On the other hand men were treated as sole breadwinners within an assumed nuclear family and therefore women became marginalised within this cash economy. This resulted in significant gender inequality for ordinary women (Midamba 1990 and Hollander 1979). The gender roles established during the colonial period continue to impact on women's participation in public decision making in the postcolonial Kenyan society.

2.3.3 Gender Roles in the Postcolonial Kenyan Society

The gender roles in the postcolonial Kenyan society are mainly influenced by the prevailing political, social and legal frameworks, most of which were inherited from the traditional society and the colonial government. In this section I examine these frameworks and show how they contribute to the continued subordination of women in the Kenyan society.

Political framework

As mention in the introduction to this chapter Kenya (see section 2.2) has been a political dictatorship for many years (40 years). An important feature of Kenya's politics is that the institutional expressions of multiparty politics, whether in terms of political party formation or informal political alliance and lobbying, express itself along tribal lines. Political parties invariably represent specific tribal groups. Typically a party is headed by a tribal patron who engages with the electorate chiefly

through the recruitment of clients. Voting patterns in both the 1992, 1997 and 2002 elections confirm that tribalism is the primary form of political organisation and presidential candidates and political parties get support predominantly from their tribal regions (Omolo 2002).

In the wake of the first multiparty elections in 1992 and 1997, politically motivated tribal *clashes* erupted in the Rift Valley province of Kenya, in which the predominantly Kalenjin (tribe of the president) supporters of KANU (ruling party) attacked members of pro-opposition ethnic groups mainly the Kikuyu. The tribal violence left hundreds of people dead or injured, and thousands of others displaced from their homes and living in makeshift shelters. The tribal clashes were fuelled by various parliamentary candidates who were making potentially inflammatory campaign speeches during the run up to the elections (Article 19, 1998).

The dominant political system in Kenya under both the one party state and multiparty systems is one which involves redistributing national resources as marks of personal favour to followers who respond with loyalty to the leader rather than to the institutions the leader represents. Omolo (2002, p.219) observes that in this system of government “big men” at the apex of power compete to command some share of the “national cake” which they then redistribute through their own networks of followers. It is important to note that even senior appointments in public universities are based on political appointments (see section 3.3.1). In such a system women have not been major beneficiaries due to the cultural and traditional customs governing relationships between men and women in Kenya.

The political process in Kenya is also characterised by the exclusion of women from the national decision making structures. For a long time the government official position has been that women are not discriminated against in Kenya (Nzomo 1993 and Kameri-Mbote and Kiai 1993). As a result, the Kenyan government has been reluctant to legislate for policies especially those that it has signed and ratified at

international and regional conventions and declarations. This reluctance is mainly because some of the politicians including the former president (Moi) argue that the Kenyan constitution provides for equality between men and women. The former president of the Republic of Kenya (1978-2002) was openly against attempts to promote women to positions of leadership through affirmative action. In fact a gender equality bill that proposed the enactment of affirmative action policy was not passed in parliament due to his influence. He once said while presiding over a graduation ceremony in one of the public universities:

Most leaders and other MPs today believe in toxic *social ideas* (my emphasis). Ladies, in particular, you know I don't believe in affirmative action for women; this I have said openly again and again... You should rise from the past and be appointed on merit. You do not need affirmation (Omari and Opondo in Daily Nation Newspapers, Tuesday November, 27 2001, p.1).

These remarks attributed to the head of state who was also the chancellor of all public universities portray a negative attitude towards gender equality. The government's belief or assertion that women in Kenya are not discriminated against has had various effects on the participation of women in political, social and economic development. First, women's issues in Kenya have in the past been sidelined in official government policy making. The government has done this by leaving the coordination of all women's issues to the Women's Bureau which was a small department within a ministry. This has had the effect of making policies and development plans that are gender blind or insensitive to the status of women (Kameri-Mbote and Kiai 1993 and Mutindi-Mumbua 2001). Second, the government did not allocate enough resources to issues related to women. Lastly, the government position has partly resulted in the exclusion of women from public decision making. I will use the examples of women's participation in politics and the Civil service to illustrate the effects the political framework described on the status of women in the postcolonial Kenyan society.

Women's representation in parliament

Women have poor representation in parliament and the local authorities. Whilst the December 2002 presidential and parliamentary elections ushered in the highest number of women parliamentarians ever, even after the figures for both elected (9) and nominated (8) members are added, they still only constitute 7.7% of the new parliament out of a total of 222. During the 1997 parliamentary elections, women comprised 5.7% of the members of parliament compared to 2.2% in 1992. The current figure of 7.7% is the lowest in the East African sub region. For example, in Mozambique women comprise 30%, in Uganda, 24.7% and Tanzania 22.3% of members of parliament (World Bank 2003). Increased female participation in national politics (parliament) in countries like Uganda is mainly due to the affirmative action policy initiated by the state. Under this policy each district in Uganda is required to elect a woman representative to parliament. The affirmative action programme in Uganda is embedded in the constitution (Article 32 (1) although parliament will review it after 10 years since 1995 (Kwesiga 2002).

The representation of women in parliament point to glaring gender disparities as a majority of Kenya's elected parliamentarians in the current parliament are men and yet they constitute only 48% of the population. Quite unsurprisingly, therefore, Kenya's lawmaking process is not gender sensitive. Moreover, the women parliamentarians are considered "*outsiders or intruders*" into what has been traditionally a male domain (Oyugi 2003, p.46). The male dominance of parliament could be one of the reasons why some of the draconian and outdated parliamentary rules and practices have not been changed. For example, the logo at the entrance of parliament reads "For the welfare of Society and the Just Government of Men". Women MPs are not allowed to carry their handbags into the house for supposedly security reasons. In November 2003, 11 women MPs protested against the standing orders not allowing them to carry their handbags into the house by walking in with them in defiance. The women said that this rule was discriminatory as men MPs were never subjected to checks to ascertain that they never

carried offensive weapons into the house in their pockets. Their male colleagues protested (Muriuki 2003).

The Kenyan parliament also lacks sanitary facilities for women MPs. For example, at the time of this study there was no toilet for women in the chamber. So, women went outside or shared the men's toilets while attending parliamentary sessions. In comparison the chamber had two urinals and several toilets for men. Whenever women MPs have protested on the issue of toilets, the speaker's argument has been that the toilets in the chamber are *unisex*. This is not true as there are no provisions for sanitary disposal facilities in these *unisex* toilets. Again, the women's toilets outside the chamber are only two for 17 women MPs and several female support staff. Furthermore the supreme law-making organ of the land lacked a maternity leave policy. Because parliament had no policy on maternity leave for members of parliament the women MPs did not know when their maternity leave would begin or end if they ever got pregnant. They count on the speaker's understanding and discretion for the timing and duration of their maternity leave (Agutu 2003, Ng'ang'a 2004 and Onyango 2004).

Some of these gender discriminative laws have remained intact partly because the few women in the house are excluded from the parliamentary committees that are meant to address these issues. For example, no woman MP sits in the parliamentary service commission that is responsible for issues like maternity leave policy formulation and determines administrative aspects of the house. The leadership of parliament is in the hands of men, from the speaker to the clerk (Ng'ang'a 2004). Whenever the women MPs have sought for change of some of these laws and practices, their male colleagues have dismissed their demands. One Male MP's response to the issue of handbags was:

Their request is not justified; they just want to attract attention. They must remember that they are lawmakers and must respect laws. If they are unhappy with the rules they should work to have them changed (Muriuki 2003, p.5).

This comment by a law maker appears to reinforce the official government position that women are not discriminated against. A study carried out in 2004 by the Institute of Civil Affairs and Development (a non governmental organisation) on the participation of members of parliament in house debates revealed that most questions raised by women in parliament are left pending (Kikechi 2005).

Women's Participation in the Civil Service

There are slightly more women working in the formal and public sector in Kenya today. According the National Economic Survey (2002) in 2001, women comprised 29.6% of formal sector employment. The largest proportion of women (58.8%) was employed in community, social and personnel services with education services taking 27.1% of the women employed. However, women's participation in jobs traditionally dominated by men (building and construction) still remains low (6.3%). Majority (67%) of the women in Kenya are concentrated in the informal sector (semi organized and unregulated activities) (National Economic Survey 2002). A summary of the positions women occupy in the Kenyan civil service is given in the Table 3.

Table 3: Women's Participation in the Kenyan Civil service as at July 2002

Position	Male	Female	Total
Cabinet Minister	20	3	23
Asst. Minister	20	4	24
Permanent Secretary	20	4	24
Directors	14	3	17
Judiciary	274	141	415
High Commissioners	28	6	34
Provincial commissioner	7	1	8
District Commissioner	65	5	70
Deputy Secretary	72	14	86

Source: Adapted from World Bank 2003, pp 23-27

The data in the Table 3 shows that majority of the women (33.9%) civil servants are concentrated in the judiciary. The most senior positions in the civil service in Kenya are occupied by men. The appointment of 7

women to the cabinet under the new government is the highest ever in the history of Kenya.

The situation of women in Kenya's political system is largely attributed to a legacy of systemic, institutionalised and legalised gender bias, patriarchal attitudes, weak national gender machinery and lack of a national policy on gender (World Bank 2003). It can also be attributed to the fact that the political system is used as a means of co-opting and rewarding the elite from certain ethnic groups within Kenya, with the objective of incorporating them into the system of government. This system creates a supply of patronage in the form of appointments to key decision making in national institutions, land, business opportunities and financial rewards. For women who are the most marginalized, gaining access to national decision making structures is unlikely (World Bank 2003).

The Kenyan government in the past has also maintained close control and influence over the expansion, structure and activities of women's organisations in the country (Nzomo 1993 and Kameri-Mbote and Kiai 1993). For example, those women's organisations or individuals within them that have challenged the government in relation women's issues, have often come under "censure and harassment, while those who support the government have been rewarded and accorded high official status" (Nzomo 1993, p 135).

The prevailing attitudes towards women's participation in public decision making reflect the patriarchal nature of the Kenyan society. For example, some men think that leadership should be reserved for men. A Kenyan man being interviewed by the media on the issue of women and leadership had this to say:

Women should not be in positions of leadership. How can a woman lead men? For example, if a woman becomes a president and gets pregnant or sick, who will be in the office (KTN Documentary on Women and Politics on 15/4/2002).

This comments shows how the sex role (biological) of women is used by some men to justify their continued subordination in society (Crawford and Unger 2000)

Legal framework

The constitution of Kenya is the supreme legal document that contains the laws that govern the country. It is supposed to protect all individuals in Kenyan regardless of the race, religion or sex. However, the Kenyan constitution discriminates against women in two ways: first, it does not provide for full protection from discrimination on the basis of sex. This is because sections 82 (4b and c) provide exemptions for discrimination in personal law justified on the basis of customary or religious law in matters relating to adoption, marriage, divorce, burial and devolution of property on death (inheritance) or other matters of personal law. In all tribes in Kenya, customary laws have precedence over national laws with regard to marriage and divorce, inheritance, property ownership, custody of children and widowhood (Nzomo 1995).

Second, the constitution directly discriminates against women in its citizenship provisions. In sections 90 and 91 of the constitution women are granted a subsidiary form of citizenship. For example, Kenyan men who marry non Kenyans can automatically bequeath citizenship on their children and spouses whereas women cannot.

The constitutional legitimization of sex discrimination has far reaching consequences for women in Kenya. The areas where the constitution allows discrimination based on customary laws (marriage, divorce and property ownership) are the ones in which women are disadvantaged most in the patriarchal set up of the Kenyan society. This implies that where women are most affected, the constitution offers them no protection (Mucai- Kattambo et al 1995). These laws have implications on women's access to resources and ownership of property. Allowing sex discrimination has contributed to women being ignored in the political process, policy making and implementation. The mixture of

modern and customary laws in issues related to women and marriage in particular has served to disadvantage women in society. Nzomo (1995) argues that:

The simultaneous existence and application of customary, religious and statutory laws leads to confusion, especially within the framework of family law: -marriage, divorce and separation, custody and maintenance of children...This has resulted ...in a situation where these different legal systems are habitually manipulated with the effect of discriminating against women (p.42).

This mixture of statutory law, varying customs and traditional practices complicate and limit women's legal rights; for example, a man can enter into civil marriage which is meant to be monogamous but he will later revert to customary practice which recognises polygamy. So, in such cases there is a clash between the traditional or customary law and the documented legal framework contained in the constitution. Overall the Kenyan constitution is inadequate, discriminatory, complex, costly to administer and due to many socio-economic factors, not very accessible to women (Nzomo 1995). Mucai- Kattambo et al (1995) argue that the enjoyment of both civil and political rights is crucial to the achievement of gender equity in society. The existing constitutional silence on sex discrimination ensures that where such discrimination occurs there is no clear-cut existing operative laws, which can be relied on to, challenge the discrimination. Some sections of the constitution legitimise the traditional position, which accords women fewer privileges than men, in matters concerning their families, marriage, divorce and succession. Section 82 of the Kenyan constitution advocates for sex discrimination in matters of personal law, divorce and succession.

The campaigns for the democratisation process in Kenya in the 1990s also involved calls for a review of the Kenyan Constitution. As a result of these campaigns in June 2001 the Constitutions of Kenya Review Commission was established by an act of parliament. The commission embarked on the task of reviewing Kenya's constitution. A draft constitution was produced in March 2003. In relation to gender equality

in the Kenyan society the draft constitution makes several gender responsive recommendations the implementation of which would greatly contribute to gender parity in Kenya's legislative framework (Wanyande 2003). Some of the recommendations in the draft constitution related to gender include:

- The prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sex.
- Limited provisions for affirmative action on the basis of gender in access to appointative and elective positions.
- Recognition of women as a marginalized group.
- Granting of equal citizenship to both men and women (World Bank 2003, p. 45).

Such proposals if enacted into law will go a long way towards enhancing women's participation in the decision making process in Kenya.

The change of government in December 2002 after 40 years gave Kenyan women some hope for better legislation. The new president in his inaugural address promised to take gender equity issues seriously. He promised that his government will "establish a fully-fledged Gender Commission to mainstream gender issues in national development" (Omari 2003, p 1). For the first time a Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and social services was established in 2003. The new government also promised to enact a new constitution within hundred days of assuming office. Unfortunately, the NARC government has not delivered on most of its election pledges partly due to in-fighting and disagreements among the coalition parties. For example by May 2005 a new constitution had not been enacted.

Social framework

In the postcolonial Kenyan Society women bear the main responsibilities for the welfare of families and provide the physical labour required to accomplish the domestic tasks. These responsibilities often result in role conflict and stress for career women. This role conflict is exacerbated by separation between the public and private spheres of work in the Kenyan society created during colonialism (Njiro 1993 and AAWORD 1998).

Njiro (1993) in her analysis of women's participation in the labour force in Kenya reports that women's reproductive activities are not lessened by their joining paid employment nor are their unpaid responsibilities improved by urbanisation. She found that in both rural and urban areas, women worked longer and more hours than men in domestic production. For example, while rural women were found to spend 23 hours per week in domestic production compared to men's 3 hours, urban women spent 27 hours per week compared to 10 hours per week for men. Note that the men in urban areas were spending more hours in domestic production because they had left their wives in rural areas (Njiro *ibid*, p.68). AAWORD (1998) adds that in spite of the fact that many Kenyan women participate in the waged labour market, they have not been relieved of any of their traditional familial duties. Instead they continue to play the triple roles as producers, maintainers and reproducers.

The separation between public and private sphere in paid employment patterns means that career women have to make difficult choices. These choices are even more difficult for women academics who require a higher qualification in order to advance their career in the higher education sector. Mutindi-Mumbua (2001) observes that the sacrifices that women make to achieve higher education are many. For her, the ultimate sacrifice was leaving her two young children- a two year old and a three-year-old, to pursue a masters degree abroad. Mutindi-Mumbua says:

It was very difficult for me to reconcile the contradictions of motherhood and the development of my career. For a woman to leave her young children to pursue her education abroad was a choice that few Kenyan men and women accepted... I knew how important it was for a woman to have something that she could call her own. Education was that "something" that could give a woman economic independence (p. IX).

These are the difficulties I experienced when I was granted an opportunity to pursue my research degree in the UK. It was indeed a very difficult decision for me to make. Having a young family, I had to

do a lot of negotiations with family (extended) and friends to be allowed to pursue my research degree abroad. Even after I had been given the permission I found myself suffering from a sense of guilt for having left my children and husband to come and acquire a higher degree. The guilt partly explained the several trips I made back home for the duration of my programme. Some of my family members and friends consider my decision to leave my family for further studies as a selfish one. Moreover having little education themselves they think I am already too educated to pursue further education. But I also look at the future like Mutindi-Mumbua (2002) and I know how important it is for me to have something I can call my own.

Marriage is still considered compulsory in Kenya as single (unmarried or widowed) women are ridiculed in society (Gitome 2002 and Wamue 2002). Gitome (2002) writing on the challenges of single motherhood in the post colonial Kenyan society observes that “single mother families are associated with immorality, delinquency and prostitution” and therefore such women face a number of social and economic problems (p.99). Sometimes senior positions of leaderships in society are given on the basis of one’s marital status. A comment by one Member of Parliament in the media shows the importance attached to marriage especially for women. He said:

Women divorcees should not hold positions of leadership because they have failed to manage their families; especially they should not be appointed judges of the high court. (Daily Nation Newspaper July 10 2002, p.5).

This comment suggests that women’s ability to manage their families supposedly determines the extent to which they can participate in public decision making positions. I was surprised that similar attitudes are held by some of the men managers I talked to during the field interviews (see section 8.3). Men’s marital status appears not to affect their appointment to leadership positions. For example, the second President of Kenya (1978-2002) was separated from his wife before he ascended to the presidency and this did not raise any concerns among his colleagues.

The social framework of the Kenyan society has implications for women's participation in public decision-making. For example, because society expects girls to get married and be looked after by their husbands, their education is not taken seriously as that of their brothers. The importance attached to marriage in most tribes leads to early marriage, which is a major cause of school dropout in Kenya. Payment of bridewealth or dowry in some societies often leads to early betrothal. Marriage also affects women's access to higher education because women are expected to get married before pursuing higher degrees. The women interviewed in this study alluded to the pressures that the socio cultural expectations to get married and manage their families had imposed on their career advancement as academics and managers. The single women in the study also mentioned how their marital status affected the way they were perceived in the wider society (See sections 6.2, 7.4 and 8.3).

2.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I have described the social, economic, political and legal context of my study. In the examination of gender roles in the traditional Kenyan society I have shown that although there was a clear division of labour among men and women, it was not sexist in the modern terms. The roles performed by men and women were complementary. The traditional Kenyan society underwent tremendous changes with the coming of colonialists who introduced western values through Christianity, cash economy and formal education. These western values and laws significantly undermined the status of women in the Kenyan society. I have also examined how the political, legal and social frameworks in the postcolonial Kenyan society have continued to position women differently from men in society. In the examination of the political and legal framework, an important aspect which has emerged is that some practices and laws are used purposely to preserve the dominance of men in power.

For example, the practice of using political powers to reward those who are supportive of the establishment has had negative effects on women's participation in politics and even the civil service. Again the application of customary laws allows discrimination of women in some aspects. Therefore, I argue that although women in the Kenyan society are not constitutionally kept out of power, the legal and patriarchal attitudes mainly resulting from the gender roles prevailing in the traditional society, during colonialism and reinforced by the Kenyan government, they are either directly or indirectly excluded from positions of leadership in the Kenyan society. I have also shown that women in Kenya continue to bear heavy domestic responsibilities within the family context. The heavy domestic responsibilities tend to have various effects on women's career development and participation in leadership positions in society in general and in university management in particular. It is against this wider social, legal and political context/frameworks described in this chapter that I explore, explain and interpret the experiences of the women managers interviewed in this study. In the next chapter I examine the university policy framework by describing how managers in Kenyan universities are appointed.

Chapter Three: Management of Kenyan universities.

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I have examined the participation of women in the Kenyan society in general by describing the gender roles in the precolonial, colonial and postcolonial contexts. However, my main concern in this study is the participation of women in university management in Kenya. Therefore, in this chapter I examine the university context in which the women I interviewed worked. I begin the chapter by giving a brief history of university education in Kenya. I then move on to describe the management structure of public and private universities. The management structure of public universities is similar because the universities are established by an act of parliament. The structure of the private universities differs from one university to another depending on the sponsoring organisation. For the sake of maintaining anonymity the structure for the private university used in this study is not included. Instead I illustrate how some of the private universities are managed by using the case of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa where I work. The reason why I include the management structures of universities is to enable me explain the policies governing the appointment of university managers.

3.2 University Education in Kenya

University education in Kenya can be traced to 1956 when the Royal Technical College was established in Nairobi. By 1961, the Royal Technical College had evolved into a university college giving London University degrees. In 1964 it became a college in the University of East Africa under the name Royal College Nairobi (University of Nairobi Act 1985). The new university college had a Eurocentric syllabus designed to mould a westernised elite for the newly-independent country in keeping with the post-colonial emphasis on continuity, and not a radical break with the colonial past (Achola, et al 1990). The main goal of the college at the time was to produce highly qualified personnel for the

countries of East Africa as a constituent college of the University of London. The colonial model entailed imitation of British universities. The purpose was to nurture and sustain an intellectual elite through similar organisation, similar procedures and similar curriculum (Karani 1998). In 1970, the university of East Africa was disbanded and an autonomous university of Nairobi established through an act of parliament. The early 1980s and 1990s saw the establishment of five more public universities.

In the years following independence, Kenya experienced rapid expansion of primary and secondary education. The growing demand for advanced training led to increased demand for higher education. The number of universities has grown from one public university college in 1964 to 6 public and 15 private universities in 2004. Enrolment in the public universities has also grown from 700 in 1964 to over 50,000 students in 2004 (Commission for Higher Education 2004). Despite the high demand for university education in Kenya, public universities admit about 10,000 students annually out of over 30,000 qualifying secondary school graduates. For example, in the year 2002 there were a total of 198,356 students who sat for the Kenya Certificate of Secondary School Examination (KCSE), the university qualifying examination, 42,721 students attained the minimum university entry requirement (Grade C+) but because of the limited facilities in the public universities only 10,872 (25%) students were selected for university courses. And because of the high performance in KCSE the cut off point was increased from 62 to 64 for males and from 61 to 63 for females (Joint Admissions Board 2003). In relation to gender, admissions to universities reflect the difference between the number of women and men admitted. Women comprised 32.2% of all the students enrolled in all the public universities during the 2001/2002 academic year (See Table 8 in Appendix G).

The high demand for university education in Kenya has also brought about the establishment of a total of 15 private universities most of which are run by Christian organisations (Commission for Higher Education 2004). The private

universities have arisen due to the inability of the public universities to absorb all university-qualifying students. The private universities fall into three categories (See Table 7 in Appendix F). One group comprises those that have been chartered by the Kenyan government and therefore offer local degrees and diplomas just like the public universities. The second group comprises of those that are registered and are yet to be chartered. These offer degrees and diplomas in the names of parent universities abroad. The last category is that of those operating on letters of interim authority. They also offer degrees and diplomas of the parent universities abroad. In Kenya 5 out of the 6 of the private chartered universities are sponsored and managed by Christian organisations. All the six registered universities are sponsored and managed by Christian organisations. Most of the Christian sponsored private universities offer courses mainly geared towards training church ministers. Nguru (1990) observes that the major aim of these church affiliated private universities is the same as it was with the earlier missionary schools, namely, to promote the spread of the Christian gospel.

Private universities enroll slightly more female than male students. For example, in the 2001/2002 women comprised of 54.5% of the students enrolled in the private chartered universities (see Table 9 in appendix G). The high female enrolment could be attributed to the fact that most of the private universities offer courses in the social sciences and women tend to be over represented in these courses. Another possible reason for the high female enrolment is the backlog of about two years in public universities resulting from student unrests that lead to university closures. Students who sit for the university entrance (KCSE) have to wait for up to two years before they are admitted to public universities. Parents who are able to pay for the education of their children seek admission in the private universities soon after the KCSE results are released (World Bank 2003).

Students in Kenya follow eight years of primary, four years of secondary and a minimum of four years of university education. The examination taken in

secondary schools is the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). The criterion for admission to university is the possession of KCSE with a minimum average grade of C+ in eight subjects. Applicants to public universities seek admission through the Joint Admissions Board (JAB), which is made up of vice chancellors, deputy vice chancellors, chief academic officers and registrars of the public universities. Applications for admissions to the public universities are submitted to the secretary of JAB for processing and for selection by the board. Private universities invite direct applicants.

Students admitted to public universities pay for their education and meet their maintenance through a government loan provided by the Higher Education Loans Board (HELB). Students are expected to repay the loan after graduation upon starting work. Those admitted to private universities meet the full cost of their education. They can also apply for a loan from HELB to meet the cost of tuition fees but such grants are very limited for students in private universities. The academic year in Kenyan universities follows a semester system and starts in August/September and ends in May/June.

3.3. Management of Kenyan Universities.

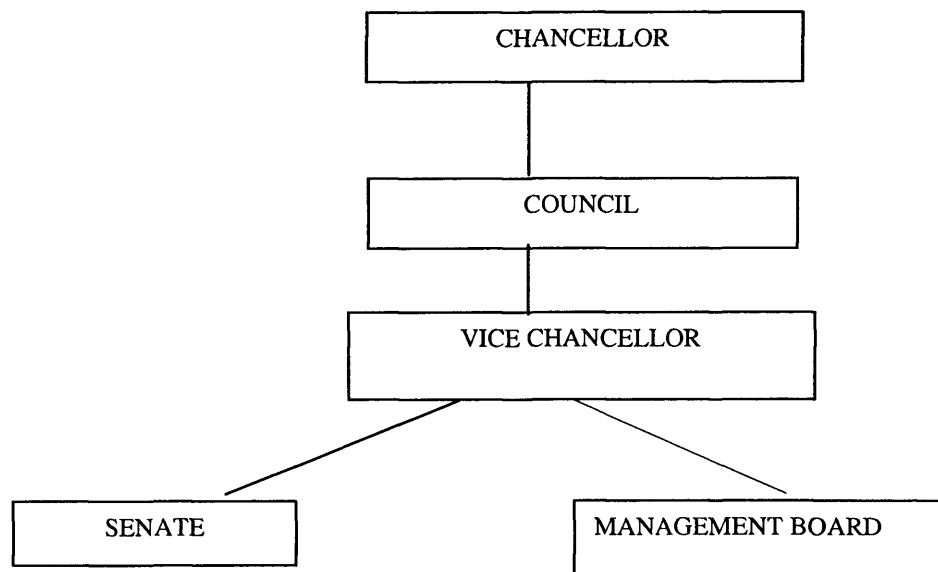
The charters that the Kenyan government gives to the public and private universities upon accreditation stipulate the policies governing individual universities. The university charters define the powers of the universities and its basic structure of governance, including major committees and officers. The powers and responsibilities set out in the charter and statutes provide the framework within which the whole decision making process takes place. The charter and statutes of the universities state how the officers of the universities shall be appointed and in addition make provision for the appointment, by council, of such other officers as may be required from time to time (Commission for Higher Education 2004).

All public universities are headed by the chancellor as the administrative and academic head of the university. Until June 2003 the chancellor of all public universities was the president of the republic of Kenya. Chancellors in private universities are leaders of the sponsoring organisation or a highly distinguished individual in society. The governance of both public and private universities is carried out by the governing councils or board of trustees. The vice-chancellor as the chief executive carries out the day to day management of all universities (public and private), with the assistance of their deputies and other senior academic or administrative staff. The management structure of public universities and one private university are shown in figures 1 and 2 respectively.

3.3.1 Management of public universities

In public universities in Kenya for purposes of terms and conditions of employment staff are categorised into academic, senior administrative staff, library staff, the middle level and junior levels of staff. The senior administrative staff of the university also known as the chief officers of the university include; the Vice chancellors, deputy vice chancellors, registrars, finance officer and such other members of staff not being engaged in research or teaching. The academic staff include; the librarian and all members of staff who are engaged in teaching or research (Amended university Act 1993, p. 20). In this study I used university managers to refer to both the academic and administrative management positions. The men and women managers I interviewed were drawn from these two categories.

Figure 1 Management Structure of Public Universities



Source: University Calendar of One of the public universities

The Chancellor

The chancellor is the head of all public universities in Kenya. For example, the Universities Act. Cap. 210b stipulates that the president of the republic of Kenya shall:

- be the chancellor of all public universities.
- appoint the vice-chancellors of the respective public universities who are the administrative heads of these institutions.
- appoint the councils to run the respective public universities (Government of Kenya: Amended University Act 1993, p. 18).

According the amended public university statutes “a person who is appointed chancellor by the president holds the office for such period as the president will determine but that person ceases to hold office if there is a change in the holder of the office of the president” (Government of Kenya: Amended University Act 1993, p.18). The university statutes do not specify the criteria or the

qualifications of the people to be considered for the post of chancellor.

The chancellor in public universities appoints the vice chancellors and their deputies in consultation with the university council. These appointments are made from among the senior academic staff (associate professor and professors) of the university who are on permanent and pensionable terms. The vice chancellors and deputy vice chancellors hold office for a period of five years and they are eligible for reappointment.

The fact that the president of the republic of Kenya was the chancellor of these universities with powers to hire and fire the senior university managers had implications for the participation of women in university management. The process of appointing vice-chancellors, council members and other senior university managers has been found to be based on other means than academic and administrative capability (Sifuna 1997 and Achola and Aseka 2001). Achola and Aseka (2001) in their analysis of appointment of university managers in public universities in Kenya observe that when the presidents assume the position of chancellor in public universities they appropriate to themselves responsibility for appointing the chief executives, vice chancellors and rectors. In most cases Achola and Aseka argue “political loyalty often precedes all other considerations” (p.7).

There have been instances in the past where the roles of the chancellor (president) in public universities have gone beyond those outlined in the university statutes. For example, in addition to appointing key university administrators and members of the university councils, the former president also issued directives on the numbers of students to be admitted to the universities, ordered closures, determined the terms and conditions of service for university staff and censored academic staff member’s research, teaching and travel agendas by requiring them to obtain official research and travel authority (Mwiria 1992). This was especially the case in the 1980s when many university

professors who were deemed to be opposed to the government of the day were detained without trial and a majority went into self-exile to escape torture or detention without trial. Many student leaders were also expelled and detained for political reasons during the former regime. The former president also banned the Universities Academic Staff Union (USAU).

A study conducted by Sifuna (1997) on the management of Kenyan universities found that most of the appointments to senior management positions in public universities were political rewards. A respondent in Sifuna (1997) observed that:

Most of these appointments are political rewards and hence have no relation to university needs of teaching, training and research. These political appointees are answerable to nobody other than the chancellor (p.35).

This practice of appointing only his political allies made the university staff, academic and administrative, associate the managers with the government's misdeeds in society and therefore, after the change of government in December 2002, many managers especially the vice chancellors were removed (see section 7.5).

With the change of government in Kenya in December 2002, the NARC president appointed chancellors for individual public universities in June 2003.

It is significant to note that no woman was appointed a chancellor or vice chancellor when the NARC president appointed chancellors for the six public universities in June 2003. Even the longest serving women deputy vice chancellors were not promoted to the positions of vice chancellors in their universities. Instead men, some of whom had not held senior management positions within the institutions were appointed to the positions of chancellors and vice chancellors. In the public university used in this study none of the deputy vice chancellors was promoted to the position of vice-chancellor in spite of their long experience in the institution. These appointments raise questions regarding the criteria used to appoint chancellors and vice chancellors in public

universities in Kenya. Moreover, the university statutes do not specify the criteria or qualifications of the people to be considered for the post of chancellor. Merit and experience were definitely not used in these appointments. If they were, then one would imagine that at least some of the serving deputy vice chancellors would have been promoted to be vice chancellors.

At the time of this study (2004) two women headed two of the chartered private universities as vice chancellors. Another woman was the vice chancellor of one of the registered private universities in Kenya. Again in December 2004, one of the Christian sponsored universities appointed a woman as its chancellor. This is evidence suggesting that women are capable of becoming vice chancellors and chancellors. So, the question is, why were women not appointed chancellors or vice chancellors in public universities when these appointments were being made by the new government? Evidence from this study suggests that tribal balancing and political patronage could have been the criteria used to appoint the new vice chancellors and chancellors (see section 6.2).

The University Council

The university council in the public universities is made up of a chairperson, vice-chairperson and an honorary treasurer all of whom are appointed by the chancellor. The other members include: the vice chancellor, deputy vice chancellors, principles of constituent colleges, not more than ten members appointed by the president to represent the government, one member of senate, two persons appointed by the convocation from among its members, one member appointed by the staff of the university, two student representatives and two co-opted members. 60% of the university council members are appointed by the President of the republic of Kenya. The fact that most of the council members are presidential appointees has in the past led to governments views dominating council deliberations and steering university affairs in the government's favour (Mwiria 1992).

The university council in the public universities plays an important role in the appointment and promotion of both academic and administrative staff of the university. The Amended public university Act (Government of Kenya 1993) in statute xvii outlines the powers of the university council in relation of the appointment and promotion of staff as follows:

- The council shall determine the terms and conditions of appointment and promotion of staff of the university.
- Subject to this statute the council shall appoint and promote such academic and administrative staff, as it may deem necessary for the efficient functioning of the university with such duties and upon such terms and conditions as the council may prescribe from time to time.
- The council shall categories university staff for purposes of terms and conditions of employment.
- The council may review the conditions of appointment and promotion of any staff categories from time to time, provided that in so doing any changes in such conditions shall apply in individual cases only to the extent that the changes are mutually acceptable to the member of staff and the council (Government of Kenya: Amended University Act 1993, p. 19).

The university council in the public university appoints senior managers such as registrars, finance officers, deans of students and university librarian. A survey of some of the university calendars shows that women are seriously under-represented in the university councils (see Table 2). For example, at the public university there were only three women members of the university council out of a total of 29. One woman was a member because of her management position in the university and the other two were political appointees drawn from the families of prominent politicians in the country. So, it appears that in the public universities in Kenya, power and the decision making process lies almost entirely with men. The few women who for example are appointed to the university council appear not to be there on their own

professional merit.

Vice chancellor

The university vice chancellors of public universities were appointed by the president of the republic of Kenya or by the chancellor after June 2003 in consultation with the university council from among senior academic staff. The appointment is for a period of five years and one is eligible for re-appointment. The vice chancellor has the authority to appoint heads of department or units, directors of schools, centres and institutes from senior academic staff at the rank of senior lecturer and above. The heads of departments and director of schools or centres hold office for a period of two years and are eligible for reappointment for a further two years only.

Senate

The senate in the public universities is made up of the vice chancellor (chair), deputy vice chancellors, principals of constituent colleges, faculty deans, heads of academic departments, two professors elected by academic board, two members elected by academic boards, librarian, a representative from each of the boards of the faculties, institutes and six student representatives.

An examination of the senate attendance list of the public university used in this study showed that there were fewer women senate members (23 out of 112). Again it was observed that most of these women (11) attended senate by virtue of holding head of academic departments positions. I was surprised that even where the faculty academic boards and student organisations were given the opportunity to elect or nominate senate representatives, it is only men who were nominated or elected. The election or nomination of only male representatives to senate suggests the continued effect of gender stereotyping in the Kenyan society (see chapter 8 for a detailed discussion).

The University Management Board

The university management board comprises of the vice chancellor (chair), deputy vice chancellors, and principals of constituent colleges. Its roles include:

- The coordination of the university development plans.
- The efficient management of university resources, both human and material.
- Making proposals to the council and the senate on policies that have a university –wide application.

Again because most of these positions are occupied by men, it means that they are the ones who control and manage both human and material resources owned by the university.

Deans of Faculty

The deans of faculty are elected by the faculty board members from among the professors, associate professors and senior lecturers for a term of two years. A person can be re-elected for a further two years as dean. The senior lecturers become eligible for election “only if they have served for at least two years as substantive chairmen (sic) of academic departments or directors of institutes or schools in the university” (Government of Kenya Amended University Act 1993, p.22). Deans who are elected are subject to confirmation by the senate and the university council. In cases where a faculty board fails to nominate a person for election, the vice chancellor appoints an acting dean in consultation with the heads of department within the faculty. The election of deans of faculty is by secret ballot and the deputy vice chancellor academic affairs acts as the returning officer.

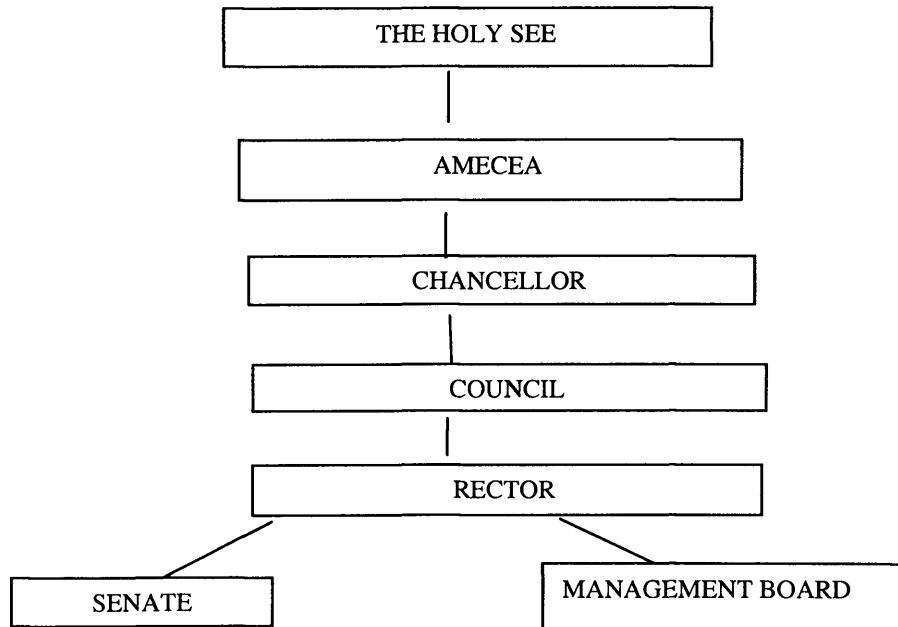
The foregoing description of the policies and practices governing the appointment and promotion of university managers in the public universities shows that most of the management positions except deans of faculties are by appointment. The policies on appointment and promotion of academic and administrative staff as contained in various universities statutes shows that the

chancellor through the university council determines who occupies senior management positions in university management especially in public universities. Most of the management positions were not advertised or subjected to competitive selection. The positions of deans of faculty were advertised within the university. The policies also stipulate that the appointees need to achieve a certain academic rank (senior lecturer) and sometimes have some experience in administration before they are appointed.

3.3.2. Management of Private Universities: The Case of Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA).

Majority of the private universities in Kenya are sponsored by Christian organisations who foresee their governance. For purposes of maintaining anonymity of the private university used in this study, I will illustrate how private universities are managed by using the example of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA) where I work and I am familiar with the management structure. At CUEA staff are categorised into academic staff (teaching), senior non-teaching staff (finance officer, Librarian), middle level (Secretaries and other library staff) and support staff (facilities and grounds people). The governance structure of CUEA is shown in figure 2.

Figure 2 Management Structure of CUEA



Source: Catholic University of Eastern Africa Charter 1992.

The Holy See

The Holy See refers to the Roman Pontiff who is the highest governor of CUEA. He governs the university through the Congregation for Catholic Education, Vatican City. The charter of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa states that: “the university is under the ecclesiastical authority of the Roman Pontiff, and therefore it is under the congregation of the Catholic Education, Vatican City” (CUEA Charter p. 24). The Congregation for Catholic Education is:

the commission of the Roman Catholic Church established by His Holiness the Supreme Pontiff which has competence over ecclesiastical institutions established by the authority of the Vatican, Catholic colleges and universities (CUEA Charter 1992, p.7).

AMECEA

The Association of Member Episcopal Conferences of Eastern Africa (AMECEA) is the founder of CUEA. The Association is made up of Episcopal

conferences in eight East African countries, that is, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Sudan, Zambia, Malawi, Uganda and Eritrea. Hence CUEA is a regional university drawing its students and staff from all the eight countries. AMECEA has full responsibility over governance and future development of CUEA. Although it comes second in the organisational hierarchy it plays a more direct governance role in the management of CUEA. It represents the Roman Pontiff at the university. AMECEA has the powers to appoint the chancellor, the rector (vice chancellor) and the vice-rectors (deputy vice chancellors) from the names proposed by the council. AMECEA submits these names to the Congregation for Catholic Education, Vatican City for confirmation.

In the past years the chancellor of the university has normally been the secretary general of AMECEA. The position of secretary general of AMECEA is held for a period of five years and is rotational among the eight countries. The chancellor represents the Holy See to the university and equally the university to the Holy See and other civil authorities.

The University Council

The council is the governing body that assumes full responsibility over the university. It represents AMECEA in the university and is responsible for the doctrine, the morals and the discipline of the university as well as its integral development. It is made up of chancellor (chair), one member elected by each national Episcopal conference, local diocesan bishop, chairperson of AMECEA (ex-officio), Secretary General of AMECEA (ex-officio), rector, two members elected by senate, two co-opted members. The members of the council are appointed for a period of three years and are eligible for re-appointment. Given its sponsorship the university council of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa comprises mainly the clergy (bishops and priests) with one or two lay people. There is one co-opted woman member out of a total of 17. The university council at CUEA plays the same role as the councils in public

universities.

Senate

The senate is made up of the rector, vice-rector(s), principals of constituent colleges, deans, directors, heads of departments, all professors, one representative elected from among associate professors, one full time lecturer, registrar (secretary), librarian, bursar, dean of students and two student representatives.

The University Management Board

The management board of CUEA is made up of the rector, vice rectors, deans of faculties, financial administrator, librarian and personnel manager. This board performs the same functions as the one in the public universities

At CUEA the senior university managers such as vice rectors are appointed by AMECEA from the names proposed by the university council. There are three vice rectors at CUEA. These are vice rector academic affairs, vice rector finance and vice rector administration. The other university managers such as the librarian, registrar, dean of students, Bursar (financial administrator) are appointed mainly by the university council. Deans of faculties are elected just like in the public universities. The heads and deputy heads of academic departments are appointed by the rector. The process of appointing heads begins at the departmental level where the full-time academic staff members propose three names in order of preference to the chairperson of the Evaluation Committee for senior administrators. After deliberation the committee forwards one name to the rector for appointment. In most Christian sponsored universities the Christian commitment and practice play an important role in determining whether one is recruited as a member of staff or appointed to a management position. The preamble to CUEA staffing Manual (1997) states in part:

The staff of The Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA) is

expected to participate actively in fostering and promoting the noble ideals of Catholic Higher Education so as to form a generation marked by outstanding learning, higher moral maturity and readiness to offer their own contribution to the church and to society (p.1).

In the guidelines for the interview session for new members of academic staff the interview panel is advised to be on the look out “for candidates who would be committed to the educational mission of CUEA”. In addition to testing successful teaching experience, appropriate educational background, scholarly accomplishment and /or promise, the panel also looks for “commitment to catholic higher education, witness to Christian life and respect for Catholic principles” (CUEA Staffing Manual 1997, p, 5). An analysis of job application forms and interview guidelines of other Christian sponsored institutions revealed that the same requirements are used in recruiting staff in these universities (Onsongo 2002). During the interviews for recruitment emphasis is given to Christian witness, hence, there are questions geared towards finding out how many times one reads the bible, attends prayer meetings and their role in the local church. In most cases, the referees have to include a local church minister/pastor who knows the applicant very well and can speak about their Christian commitment and how it is lived in their daily activities. Some of the questions the referee is asked in the reference form in one Christian sponsored university include:

- If married, will the spouse be a help or a hindrance to the applicant’s ministry?
- Is their home well ordered?
- Are the children well behaved? (Onsongo 2002, p. 39)

Given these guidelines one is likely to find that most academic and administrative members of staff in most of the Christian sponsored universities belong to the denomination that sponsors them. Once recruited members of staff have to continue practicing their Christian beliefs both in their personal lives and on campus. Attending the daily mass or the once a week mass set aside by the university and attending and preaching at the university chapel show continued Christian commitment. For example at CUEA there are no lectures on

Thursdays between 12.00-1.00 pm. All members of staff (academic and administrative) and students are supposed to attend mass. Flouting this regulation can result in a member of academic staff facing disciplinary action; if for example, they are found teaching during that hour.

In the private university used in this study I found similar regulations in operation. All members of staff and students recruited there have to be practicing Christians and be supportive of the Christian beliefs of the sponsoring Christian organisation. Continued Christian living on campus and at home is closely monitored. Christian living and activities are incorporated into the university calendar and day to day running of the university. For example, the third week of term in the private university is designated as Holy Week and most of the time is spent attending chapel. All offices are closed and lectures cancelled at particular times of the day during the Holy Week to allow staff and students attend chapel.

Praying and attending chapel is considered an important part of the training given in Christian sponsored private universities. These universities in addition to providing intellectual development are also keen on character development. This is reflected in their logos, vision and mission statements. For example the logo of CUEA is taken from the Gospel of John 17:17 which states that *Consecrate them in the truth*. The students admitted to these universities are also scrutinised for their Christian commitment. In the private university they were interviewed before being admitted. Because of the Christian commitment requirements in these Christian Sponsored universities, most members of staff and students who join them make a deliberate choice to study or work there. Most managers in these institutions are appointed because of their commitment and belief in the doctrines of the university. This could be the reason why most of them perceive their management positions as a calling from God (see sections 6.2 and 9.2.6). Another factor influencing the appointment of managers in private universities is the fact that they are relatively young and small and

therefore academic qualifications and experience are not emphasised in the promotion of university managers as is the case in well established public universities (see section 6.2).

There are slightly more women occupying senior management positions in private universities than public universities in Kenya (Onsongo 2002). For example, two of the chartered private universities are headed by women vice chancellors and two women deputy vice chancellors. And in December 2004 one of the Christian sponsored universities appointed a woman as its chancellor. One is likely to find more women holding head of department positions, registrar, and librarian in these universities as well. What is surprising, however, is the fact that most of these women are former employees of public universities where they served for many years and yet they were not appointed to senior management positions. A woman who had worked in a public university for over 20 years heads one private university operating under a letter of interim authority, the only women's university in Kenya.

The possible reasons why private universities are appointing more women into senior positions include the fact that they are run by Christian organisations from western countries where gender equality policies have been in operation for several years. Another possible explanation for the increased participation of women in private universities management could be their Christian commitment. There are more women practising Christians than men in Kenya (Kasomo 2004). Another reason could be the fact that women are more interested in offering service than power and status hence are more willing to move to these universities that are considered to be less prestigious in this context. One vice chancellor of a private university where there were more women heading departments than men interviewed earlier (Onsongo 2002) gave these reasons why he preferred working with women:

Women are good workers,, they perform their duties with diligence, are patient and willing to offer services to people whereas men do not have the patience especially to work in young universities which may not be

financially stable (Onsongo 2002, p. 29).

Another reason is that some of the women in these Christian sponsored universities especially those from outside Kenya were hired because their husbands had been hired either as chaplains or academic staff (Onsongo 2002). However, the women possess the necessary academic and professional qualifications for the job they are hired to do. It could also be attributed to the fact that most of these universities offer courses in the social sciences where majority of the women academic staff are concentrated (World Bank 2003).

The structure of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa is fairly representative of most private universities sponsored by Christian organisations. The difference may occur in the management structure of the Christian denomination sponsoring the university. The main Christian denominations sponsoring university education in Kenya are Methodist, Seventh Day Adventist, Presbyterian and Baptist.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter has traced the development of university education in Kenya. The management structure of Kenyan universities has been described. An examination of the policies and practices governing the appointment and promotion of university managers has raised some questions about the criteria that are used to appoint these managers especially the chancellors and vice chancellors in public universities. The policies governing appointment in Christian sponsored universities discriminate on the basis of religion. However the private universities appear to be attracting more women managers as some of the first women vice chancellors and chancellor ever in Kenya are found in these institutions. A detailed examination of how the policies governing the appointment of university managers in Kenya affect women's participation in university management is given in chapter six.

Chapter Four: Theoretical Framework

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I examine the theoretical framework that I use in this study to analyse the experiences of the women managers I interviewed. I start the chapter by giving a brief introduction to feminism as a movement and theoretical framework. This introduction leads to an explanation why I chose to work from a feminist perspective. I then move on to discuss the three feminist perspectives: Postcolonial, African and Christian feminism that I draw on in analysing some aspects of the participation of women university management in Kenya. In the discussion of these three feminist perspectives I point out their limitations which make them inadequate in explaining the experiences of the women I interviewed. Their limitations made me to opt for a feminist critical policy analysis which puts the social construction of gender at the centre of research. I finish the chapter by discussing how this theoretical framework influenced the choice of research methodology.

4.2 What is feminism?

This is a question for which no straight answer can be given because there is no monolithic feminism or feminist theory (Deem 1986, Bensimon and Marshall 1997 and Nnaemeka 1998). Feminism is a movement which has developed and shifted its focus over the years in various locations and contexts. In the 21st century some writers wonder whether they should talk of feminism or feminisms or post feminisms (Spivak 2000 and Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002). For example, Ramazanoglu and Holland (2002) define feminism as:

Unstable intellectual, political and practical activity grounded in some sense of women having common political interests across their social divisions, and so having some potential interest in acting together to transform unjust gender relations (p.170).

This definition implies that feminism covers a diversity of beliefs, practices and politics that overlap and interact with others. In its broad sense feminism has been defined as a movement that seeks for women the same opportunities and privileges that society gives men (Evans 1995, hooks 1997 and Spivak

2000). hooks (1997) defines “feminism as a struggle to end sexist oppression” and observes that when defined in this sense feminism is not limited to a particular culture, country or time (p.22). This is because women all over the world have experienced some form of social injustice brought about by the gender relations between men and women. In this study I adopt the definition given by hooks (1997) because it corrects the misconception about the purpose of feminism especially in Kenya where it is popularly taken to imply seeking to make “women the social equals of men” (Adhiambo-Oduol 1993, p.83).

Because of the diversity in feminism it has been categorised into various perspectives/ strands. The categorization of feminism is based on the different approaches and strategies adopted by activists in the women’s movement. Deem (1986) attributes the different categories of feminism to disagreements among feminists about the causes of women’s oppression:

... although all feminists would agree that women are oppressed, they would certainly have disagreements about the determinants of that oppression and the mechanisms through which it operates as well as the strategies for change (p. 11).

For example, during the early stages of feminism activists in the women’s liberation movement differed among themselves on the role of women’s issues in the process of social change and they developed distinct strategic orientations (Maynard 1995 and Vogel 1983). Some women saw the fight against women’s oppression as part of a larger struggle for socialism. For these women the task became how to resist traditional socialist tendencies to subordinate feminist issues in the course of the struggle for socialism. This group became known as the *liberal feminists*.

Other women insisted that the issue of women’s domination by men was fundamental to any process of social transformation and that it had a sharply autonomous character that required a distinct struggle. These women emphasised the primacy of sex antagonism in social development, the critical role of sexuality and sexual preference. These became known as *radical feminists*. And yet others argued that the participation of women who are conscious of their own oppression as a group is critical for the success of any

revolutionary struggle. They asserted that the key oppressions of sex, class, and race are interrelated and that the struggles against them must be coordinated. These were called the *Marxist or socialist feminists* (Vogel 1983).

These three early categories of feminism gave rise to what became to be known as the *big three* in feminist theory. These are liberal, Marxist and Radical feminists (See Vogel 1983, Tong 1992, and Maynard 1995 for a detailed discussion). The realisation that women's experiences are to a large extent influenced by their location and context has led feminists like Spivak (2000) advocate for the use of different feminist perspectives in the analysis of women's oppression. This is because the diversity of women's location has meant that feminists develop different strategies to overcome their oppression. This has led to the development of other feminist perspectives such as Postcolonial feminism, Christian feminism, African feminism and Postmodern/ Poststructural feminists (see Beasley 1999 and Peterson and Runyan 1999). For the purposes of paying attention to the location of the women managers interviewed in this study (see chapters 2 and 3), I locate my study within postcolonial feminism but also draw on some aspects of African and Christian feminism when analysing the women managers experiences in Kenyan universities. After giving this brief introduction I now explain why I chose to work from a feminist perspective.

Why use a feminist perspective?

In the first two introductory chapters I provided quantitative evidence suggesting that women are not given the same opportunities as men to participate in matters that affect their lives (e.g economic, social and political spheres- see section 1.2, 1.3 and 2.3.3) in most countries generally but also Kenya in particular. With this differential participation we cannot continue to describe institutions (private and public) as gender neutral. Therefore, I chose to work from a feminist perspective because it focuses on the participatory patterns of men and women in order to generate a more realistic picture of the situation. A feminist perspective does this by posing gender as a fundamental

category of analysis. This gender analysis improves our understanding of how gender influences relations between men and women (Mutindi-Mumbua 2000 and Potash 1989).

The main justification of why I explore these women managers' experiences in university management from a feminist perspective is that research done in the United States of America (Moore and Sagaria 1993) Australia (Wallace 2003, Blackmore and Sachs 2001 and Blackmore 1999) and the United Kingdom (Heward 1994, Morley 1994,1995,1999, Farish et al 1995, Brooks 1995, 1997, Deem and Ozga 1997, Hearn 2001 and Bagihole 1993, 1994, 2002a, 2002b and 2003) has demonstrated that work in higher education institutions is highly gendered. For example, Hearn (2001) writing a personal reflection on men and men's practices in western universities observes that there is a male numerical and cultural dominance in universities that results in the universities and academic life being "highly gendered organisationally, structurally and practically" (p.71). Hearn (ibid) identifies three features characterising gendered structures of universities in most western countries. These are:

- The exclusion of women from university education for a long time.
- Men continuing to dominate the top positions of universities in most disciplines and management positions.
- The high status universities being more male dominated (Hearn 2001, p.71).

Hearn (2001) attributes the male dominance of management in universities partly due to historical development of management as a profession dominated by men. The male numerical and cultural dominance in universities according to Hearn has served to discriminate against women indirectly because for men to retain their superior status and to exclude women, they have developed some strategies to retain their power. Some of the strategies developed by men to maintain this dominance identified in the literature especially in the west but also in this study (see chapter 8) include:

- Undermining of women's endeavors and marginalizing their scholarship and research interests (Packer 1995, Park 1996, Morley 1999, Kent and Palmer 1999, Hatt 1999 and Bell and Gordon 1999).
- Demeaning of women's contributions in management meetings (Powney 1997 and Mabokela 2003).

- Lack of acceptance of women's leadership (Kennedy 1995 and Joyner and Preston 1995)
- Use of patriarchal values to structure and determine career progression in universities (Brooks 1995).

Brooks (1995) in her research in universities in Britain and New Zealand found that patriarchal values define the operation and practices of the academy. These values are expressed in issues related to appointments, promotion and the allocation of areas of responsibility. Brooks (ibid) also found that the promotion criteria in the universities she surveyed, whether explicit or implicit were still essentially defined with a male academic career in mind and using a masculine academic career structure as a model. This career structure, Brooks argues, does not assist academic women in their career development in universities.

The gendered nature and male cultural dominance of universities has led feminists like Deem and Ozga (1997) to conclude that a variety of interacting factors affect women's promotion to and success in management posts. For example, Deem and Ozga (ibid) observe that because of the gendered nature of universities women must show outstanding abilities if they are appointed to senior management positions. Feminist critical policy analysis of universities has also shown that the dominance of men and a male culture in universities is made possible by coalitions of men in positions of power who determine who is chosen to study, to teach, do research and what subjects are most valued for research and instruction (Moore & Sagaria 1993, Bagihole and White 2003 and Essed 2003).

I consider a feminist perspective suitable for my study because it problematises these gendered relations in universities so as to understand the taken for granted relations between men and women which have led to inequities in the distribution of resources and opportunities among them (Flax, 1997). By using a feminist perspective I am able to identify the gendered consequences of seemingly gender neutral policies and practices in the two universities used in this study that position women managers differently from men managers. Instead of asking, for example, why the women managers fail

to become socialised into the academic and management culture in the universities, the feminist perspective enables me to document how the seemingly neutral appointment, promotion policies and practices, job requirements and expectations contribute to the accumulation of advantage by men and accumulation of disadvantage by women (see chapters 6 and 7). The feminist perspective therefore, enables me to enhance the argument that in the appointment of university managers in the two universities the supposedly neutral and gender blind policies and practices produce different results in the promotion of men and women managers (Bensimon and Marshall 1997 and Sylvester 1996).

I also chose a feminist perspective because it provides me with the space to reflect and talk about my personal experiences as a woman academic and manager without being apologetic about them. This is because feminist research methodology suggests that the researcher takes into account their personal experiences as part of the research process (Ardovini-Brooker 2002, Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002 and Skeggs 1994). Skeggs (1994) makes the case for a feminist theoretical framework by noting that “it can provide a framework for the researcher to explain that their individual problems are part of a wider structure and not their personal fault” (p. 88). These are the reasons why I chose to study women’s participation in university in Kenya from a feminist perspective.

4.3 Framework for this Study.

As I have indicated in the foregoing discussion there are many feminist perspectives. In this section I examine the particular feminist perspectives within which I locate my study and show how I use them. These perspectives are Postcolonial feminism, African feminism, Christian feminism and Feminist critical policy analysis. I start the discussion by giving reasons why I locate my study in each of these perspectives. I then move on to describe each of them briefly. I also point out some of the limitations of these perspectives that make them inadequate for this study. I finish the section by examining feminist critical policy analysis which is my preferred framework.

I locate my study within postcolonial feminism because, as I have argued in chapter 2 (see section 2.3.2), colonialism significantly undermined the status of women in the Kenyan society. Odejide (2005) reinforces my argument by adding that “colonialism to some extent, reinforced patriarchy through an erosion of pre-colonial institutions that gave women political and economic control”. Therefore, Odejide argues that “feminist theories suited for Africa must be informed by the historical perspective of colonialism and imperialism” (p.14).

I draw on African feminism first, because there are aspects of the African culture that continue to play an important role in determining women’s participation in the social, economic and political development. For example, in sections 2.3.2 and 2.3.3 of this thesis I show that in the Kenyan context there are customary laws governing marriage, property rights and family relations. Some of these customary laws and practices determine the participation of women and men university management in Kenya (see section 8.3). Another reason why I draw on African feminism is that often there are assumptions made especially in early western feminist writing that imply that women in low income countries lack an organised form of addressing issues affecting women (see Chopra 2004, Phendla 2004, Pedwell 2002 and Bulbeck 1998). Again some Africans including Kenyan men and women often hold the view that feminism is western and therefore has no relevance for them. Adhiambo-Oduol (1993) notes that “a number of Kenyans, male and female, are repelled by western notions of feminism” (p.83). The examination of African feminism is geared towards dispelling the myth that there is no feminism in Africa in general and in Kenya in particular.

I consider the Christian feminist perspective useful because Christianity has had a great impact on the Kenyan society. Most Kenyans are Christians and Christian organisations are playing a leading role in the provision of university education in Kenya. Again during the field interviews I found that most of the men and women relied on God to cope with the challenges they were facing as managers (see section 9.2.6).

4.3.1 Postcolonial Feminism

This strand of feminism arises from the experiences of women living in the low income countries, immigrants or indigenous minorities living in North America and Europe. Their analysis exposes how the ideologies and practices of racism, colonialism and neo-colonialism decisively contribute to the oppression of women. They draw attention to the economic, political and cultural forces of contemporary recolonisation and the nationalist and religious fundamentalisms, which they argue are the twin features of globalisation. They view globalisation as a continuation of colonisation that depends upon the exploitation of the reproduction and productive labour of the women living in the South and North. They use the term recolonisation to refer to the economic, political and cultural practices of the western countries being spread under the banner of globalisation (Peterson and Runyan 1999).

Postcolonial feminists contest western feminist assumptions about the nature of and split between public and private space supposedly characteristic of all women's lives. For example Chopra (2004) argues that women in the low income countries have never been confined in the home. Moreover, they note that these women's experience of sexism in the private sphere derives not just from patriarchal familial ideologies but also from racial/ethnic nationalist and religious ideologies that prescribe that women must look and behave in culturally authentic ways (Bulbeck 1998, Woodhull 2003 and Chopra 2004). Thus when looked through the lens of the lives of women in these countries, postcolonial feminists argue that the "private lives of women are always constructed by public forces, and that in fact are never truly private" (Peterson and Runyan 1999, p.173).

Postcolonial feminists argue that the lives of black women for example are multifaceted and cannot be fully understood using the either / or perspective of western feminism (Collins 1998, Oyeuwu'mi' 2001 and Phendla 2004). Phendla (2004) notes that using western feminism an African discourse may fail according to the western mainstream feminist yardstick which uses the either/or view of race and gender rather than the and /both view. Postcolonial

feminists therefore seek to understand “women’s lives through the interlocking categories of various constructs including race, ethnicity, gender, class, language, culture and traditional norms”. This is because, as Phendla observes, “while white women are penalised by their gender, they are privileged by their race, while both these constructs penalise black women” (p.52). Postcolonial feminists like Collins (1998) underscore the necessity of understanding women’s positions as a complex matrix of domination that requires peeling off the multiple oppressive layers to reveal their lived experiences.

Postcolonial feminists therefore, view the gender oppression of women as multilayered in the sense that it results from racism, colonialism, capitalist patriarchy and that it is experienced in families and at the national level. They engage in and foster the development of grass-roots women’s movements, which work to subvert local practices of domination, make connections between these local practices and global practices. This model (multilayered) of looking at women’s oppression, postcolonial feminists argue, gives local and diverse women space to articulate their own experiences of oppression and identify its multiple and overlapping sources. It avoids “the old sisterhood model of missionary work” in which white middle class western feminists spoke for all women (Peterson and Runyan 1999, p.173).

Although I find this perspective useful for explaining how colonialism and neocolonialism reinforces the subordination of women in society, I do not think on its own it is sufficient. It fails to explain for example, why independent (postcolonial) nations like Kenya are reluctant to legislate or enact international declarations geared toward enhancing women’s participation in society.

4.3.2 Christian Feminism.

Christian feminism is a worldview or stance that advocates for change to some of the teachings of Christianity. They advocate for the establishment of a more just and equal church for men and women as human beings created in the likeness of God. It uses the teachings of Jesus Christ as contained in the New

Testament section of the Christian Bible to argue for increased participation of women in the church's leadership and evangelisation (Burghardt 2000).

Christian feminists' critique of Christianity centre on God understood as Father, the supreme patriarch in heaven who rules his people on earth and thus legitimates the male –dominated order of society (Daly 1978, Carr 1982). Carr (ibid) notes that the major work of Christian feminist theologians thus far has been the unmasking of cultural and religious ideology that denies women's full humanity. Christian feminists have analysed the distorted traditions about women in the Bible, in the Church Fathers, in Medieval, Reformation and Modern theology and shown how these distortions affect women's participation in Christianity. Carr (ibid) makes reference to Christian feminists' works such as those of Tribble (1978) and Fiorenza (1976) who by using feminist perspectives have shown that the Bible has been grossly misinterpreted to favour male imagery and supremacy despite the fact that it contains female imagery as well.

Fiorenza (1976) cited in Carr (1982) following her feminist analysis of the Bible, for example, points out that the New Testament does not transmit a single androcentric statement or sexist story of Jesus, although he lived and preached in patriarchal culture. Christian feminists' analyses of the New Testament have shown the presence of a women's ministry and participation in early Christianity (see James 2002).

This perspective provides useful insights into how Christianity contributes to the subordination of women in society. However, Christian feminism is also limited in the sense that it cannot fully explain the limited participation of women in decision making in Kenya. This is because there are several traditions, religious beliefs, customary laws and practices among the Kenyan ethnic groups that determine the status of women in society. For this reason I do not confine myself to the Christian feminist perspective in this study. Instead I draw on it to analyse the data related to one of the strategies (relying on God) adopted by the women managers to cope with the challenges they were facing (see section 9.2.6).

4.3.3 African Feminism

There is diversity in African feminism just as there is in western feminism. Nnaemeka (1998) observes that “plurality of African feminism reflects the fluidity and dynamism of the different cultural imperatives, historical forces and localised realities conditioning women’s activities and movement in Africa” (p.6). However, Nnaemeka (ibid) also notes that there are commonalities too and shared beliefs among the different African feminisms. It is the recognition of this commonality, and for convenience, that Nnameka (ibid) observes the term African feminism is used. And it is also for convenience that an English word feminism is used to capture the different languages. Because of this diversity in African feminism in the discussion I give examples from the Kenyan context to expound on the objectives and limitations of this perspective.

African feminism owes its origins to different dynamics from those that generated western feminism. It has largely been shaped by African women’s resistance to western hegemony and its legacy within African culture (Mikell 1997). For example, in Kenya the women’s movement emerged in reaction to the low status that Kenyan women occupy in all sectors of the economy. In education and labour force for example gender discrimination has marginalised women from mainstream development (Khasiani 1993). African feminism blames westernisation and Arab culture for the low status and oppression of African women. Some African feminists like Sofala (1998) believe that these two foreign cultures ignited and fuelled a perpetual gender conflict that poisoned a healthy social order existing in the precolonial and precapitalist societies.

Because African feminism is based on the African culture and is a resistance against western feminism, it has different features and objectives. For example, African feminism is distinctly heterosexual and pro-natal. This means that African feminism values the reproductive roles of women and the ability to give birth is not considered subordinate to other roles women play in society. The pro-natal aspect of African feminism is reflected in the fact that in

many parts of Africa women strive to bear and bring up children in addition to having economic and political roles (Mikell 1997 and Njiro 1993). Njiro (1993) basing her analysis on the Kenyan government's 1986 and 1988 urban and rural labour force surveys, found that "childbearing does not limit labour force participation but intensifies women's workload by increasing the unpaid work" (p. 65).

While western feminism tends to emphasise individual autonomy for women, African feminism has tended to emphasise culturally linked communal forms of public participation (Tamale and Oloka-Onyango 2000). The nature-culture fusion of African feminism incorporates an overlap between household or domestic roles and the public/political roles African women play because in the traditional African society the distinction between domestic and public was difficult to make. The language of African feminism is one of "*collaboration and negotiation*" with men and sometimes involves "*compromise*" on the part of women. It therefore does not seek to disrupt, deconstruct and eliminate or do away with patriarchy all together as is the case, for example, with radical western feminism (Nnaemeka 1998, p.6). Writing on the women's movement in Kenya, Kameri-Mbote and Kiai (1993) believe that the support and cooperation of men is crucial if the societal biases against women are to be changed.

African feminists seek ways of solving some of the problems affecting the continent such as droughts, crop failure, coups, revolutions, refugee situations, structural adjustment programmes, human rights abuses and cultural practices that are harmful to women (Aina 1998). They advocate for the abolition of oppressive traditions such as child marriage, widowhood taboos and retention of traditional structures that are supportive of women's multiple roles (Mikell 1997, Nnaemeka 1998 and Sofala 1998).

In Kenya the women's movement advocates for the elimination of all obstacles that prevent women from participating in the development process. It advocates for women to have an equal share in responsibilities and

opportunities in all spheres of economic, social and political development (Oduol 1993).

African feminism has been criticised for its lack of serious attention to cultural practices that continue to subjugate and exploit women especially in the modern African society. These practices include polygamy, female genital mutilation and wife inheritance among others (Aidoo 1998). Again, as Aina (1998) argues, the tendency among African feminists to emphasise “traditional gender role complementarity” neglects the role conflicts in present African social, economic and political structures which are used to serve the interests of capitalist economies (p.77). African feminism therefore fails to offer useful suggestions on how women can combine their reproductive and productive roles in the modern African society characterised by individualism and a dichotomy between the public and private spheres (Aidoo 1998, Sofala 1998 and Aina 1998).

In the Kenyan context the women’s movement has failed to uplift the status of women for various reasons. First, the movement is characterised by self help women’s groups that seek to improve and uplift the status of women by involving them in income generating activities or in social or religious groups. The movement also lacks politicisation and it shies away from public comment or taking a stand on women’s issues under the pretext that these organisations are supposed to be non political. Failure to politicise women’s issues in Kenya has led to a focus on activities that are an extension of the traditional domestic and biological roles of women. As a result, the women’s movement in Kenya in the past has failed to “lobby for changes in policies, plans and laws which discriminate against women” (Kameri-Mbote and Kiai 1993, p. 17). Elsewhere Njiro (1993) observes that the women’s movement has not focused seriously on the changing role of women in the Kenyan labour market.

Another reason why the women’s movement in Kenya has not achieved much in spearheading gender equality for women is that the various organisations aimed at addressing women’s issues have been characterised by various forms

of disunity and personal differences. Some women have used the forums to further their own ambitions at the expense of women's interests. Furthermore, the movement lacks grassroot support as most of the organisations are based in the cities with very little contact with women in the rural areas (Oduol 1993 and Kinuthia 1993).

Therefore, because of these limitations of African feminism in general and the women's movement in Kenya in particular I find this perspective inadequate on its own for the analysis of women's participation in university management. It appears that it calls for the continued preservation of traditional gender roles for women ignoring the tremendous changes that have occurred in the continent as a result of colonialism, neocolonialism and globalisation. Moreover its preferred strategy of negotiation, collaboration and compromise is unlikely to improve the status of women. I draw on this perspective in the study to explore the men and women's perception of their gender roles (see section 8.3).

In this study I do not confine myself to any of the three feminist perspective discussed in this section because there is no single perspective that can be used to understand women's "multilayered experiences of gendered oppression" (Peterson and Runyan 1999, p.173). For this reason I adopt a feminist critical policy analysis to explore women's participation in university management in Kenya. In the next section I discuss the main characteristics of this perspective and show how I applied them in my study.

4.3.4 Feminist Critical Policy Analysis

Bensimon and Marshall (1997, p.6) following Latter (1991, p.71) define feminist critical policy analysis as doing research that puts the social construction of gender at the centre of one's inquiry. Gender in this case is distinguished from sex in that it refers to the socially constructed definition of women and men and the relationship between them. Whereas sex is the biological difference in the genetic composition and reproductive anatomy and function between men and women (Crawford and Unger 2000 and Acker 2003).

According to Bensimon and Marshall (ibid) feminist critical policy analysis has two objectives. The first objective is to “critique or deconstruct conventional theories and explanations and reveal the gender biases (as well as the racial, sexual, and social class) inherent in commonly accepted theories, constructs, methodologies and concepts”. The second objective is to “conduct analysis that is feminist both in its theoretical and methodological orientations” (p.6). For a study to be viewed as a feminist critical policy analysis Bensimon and Marshall (ibid) argue that it is not sufficient to include women but it must pose gender as the fundamental category of analysis, pay attention to differences among women and in local contexts, use women’s lived experiences as data and aim at transforming institutions. I now turn to a discussion of each of these characteristics of a feminist critical policy analysis and show how I apply them in my study.

Gender as a fundamental category of analysis.

The first characteristic of a feminist critical policy analysis is that it poses gender as a fundamental category of analysis. According to Bensimon and Marshall (1997) when gender is viewed as a fundamental category in a feminist critical policy analysis, the researcher is more alert to the various ways in which “gender structures experiences, relationships, processes, practices and outcomes” (p.9). Bensimon and Marshall (ibid) citing Scott (1988) argue that paying attention to gender both as a conceptual category and analytical lens when studying academics in universities means that the “differential experience of women and men academics is attributed to the consequences of a male ordered world rather than to individual differences” (p.2).

Acker (2003,) adds that adopting a gender analysis means “being alert to gender-inflected dimensions of any topic under study” (p.393). In the context of studying academics Acker (ibid) argues that a gender analysis requires attention to be paid to the obvious and subtle ways in which cultural beliefs about women and men influence the nature of what people do. Acker differentiates a gender analysis approach from “a *sex differences* approach,

where contrasts between women and men are necessarily simplified in order to highlight them” (p.394). According to Acker (ibid) a gender analysis may include such comparisons but puts greater emphasis on social and cultural expectations associated with gender and the ways they are incorporated into everyday life as well as being building blocks for social structures. Acker (ibid) continues to argue that in a gender analysis beliefs about gender, and differential treatment or opportunities related to gender become as important as or more important than the simple noting of tendencies toward difference.

In this study I focus on the social construction of gender as a lens through which I analyse the experiences of the women managers. In the gender analysis of these women’s experiences I do not simply look at how men and women manager’s experiences are different but rather I pay attention to how the socio-cultural beliefs about the roles of men and women in the Kenyan society exclude women from participation in university management (see chapter 8).

However, it is noted in other writings that the focus on gender alone to explain the relationship between men and women in society and more so the oppression of women is limiting because it tends to ignore other influences of these relationships such as race, class and disability (Crawford and Unger 2000 and Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002). My study is limited in the sense that I mainly focus is on gender. I do not pay attention to class even though the women in my study belonged to an elite class by virtue of their education and occupation as academics that occupy management positions. Tribalism is an issue that came up during the interviews and was affecting men and women’s participation in university management and the political, economic and social organisation of the Kenyan society. However, a gender analysis of the data appears to suggest that women are disadvantaged largely because of their gender even when tribalism is used to appoint and promote senior university managers (see sections 2.3.3 and 6.2).

Analysis of difference and local context specificity

The second characteristic of feminist critical policy analysis is that it is concerned with the analysis of differences and local context specificity. Bensimon and Marshall (1997) assert that in order for women to have a subject status that is equal to men's, women's difference must be recognised rather than suppressed. They argue that gender equity and nonsexist workplace cannot be attained unless conscious attention is given to women's individuality as well as to relations between women and men. Feminist Critical policy analysts such as Tierney and Bensimon (1996) contend that the eradication of overt and covert discrimination against women requires critical and gender-based appraisals of organisational structure, practices and policies as well as elimination of language and interactions that create overtly hostile patronizing or indifferent workplaces for women. Blindness to gender that is often argued by most managers in universities, leads to insensitive policies and practices such as the separation of private (home) and public (office) lives, lack of paid maternity leave policies, and meetings running late and being called at odd times. Some of these practices characterised the two institutions where the women interviewed in this study worked and they imposed challenges on them as managers (see Chapter 7).

In analysing the data from the interviews with the women managers I pay attention to their location and context as women working in Kenyan universities where there are different socio-cultural expectations for men and women. I analyse their experiences in relation to whether they are in a public or a private university because the policies governing appointment of university managers in the two contexts are different (see sections 3.4.1 and 3.4.2). I also recognise that given the traditional gender role expectations on the women interviewed are disadvantaged and therefore cannot compete on the same level with men. In the analysis of the women's experiences I assume that the differences between women are potentially as great as between women and men. In this sense, I therefore differ from Beasley's (1999) version of radical feminism which posits that "any woman has more in common with any other woman regardless of class, age, ethnic group, nationality than any woman has with any man" (p.54). At the same time, in some aspects I assume commonalities in women's experiences as managers

in Kenya universities resulting from: first, their socialisation as girls and women in the traditional African cultural values of the various ethnic groups (tribes) they belong to; second, from the gendered nature of Kenyan universities resulting in unequal promotion opportunities among men and women.

The lived experience of women as data

The third characteristic of feminist critical policy analysis is that the lived experience of women is the main source of data. Skeggs (1997) notes that experience has been seen as the basis of feminist research because “feminism as a social movement and as a personal politics began the moment women came together and began to talk to each other and make sense of their experiences as women” (p.151). Harding (1987, p. 7) adds that one distinctive feature of feminist research is that it generates its “problematic from the perspective of women’s experience”. According to Harding (ibid) the goal of feminist research is to answer questions and provide explanations about phenomena that women want and need rather than to answer the questions framed by men or by male controlled institutions. The emphasis on women’s experiences in feminist research arose from the contention that mainstream research had for a long time ignored the experiences of women in their studies. Using women’s experiences was an important aspect of this study.

Feminists have been criticised for having simplistic beliefs in experience as a direct source of general knowledge of material social realities. For example, Grant (1993) cited in Ramazanoglu and Holland (2002, p. 125) argues that since actual women have varied experiences, any claim that feminist knowledge is founded on experiences requires an abstract, universal category of ‘women’. Critics of empiricism on the other hand argue that people cannot make connections between ideas and reality from their own experience because experience cannot be communicated independently of the ideas in which it is expressed. In other words they argue that experiences have to be expressed in some language (oral, written, body, sign) that is

already part of a specific way of thinking in a particular culture, period and location (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002 and Kelly, Burton and Regan 1994).

Some critics have also argued against treating experience as factual, since the facts imply direct connections between knowledge and foundation of material reality. For example, Fuss (1989, p. 118) cited in Ramazanoglu and Holland (ibid p. 125) argues that since facts themselves are socially constituted, experience cannot be the raw material knowledge seeks to understand. Elsewhere Scott (1992) adds that experience is a discursive construct and therefore it is the interpretations made of experience that can be grasped, rather than the experience itself.

The criticisms against using experiences as data point to the fact that people's own accounts of their experience are inadequate because individuals do not necessarily possess sufficient knowledge to explain everything about their lives. Accounts will vary depending on such factors as where respondents are socially positioned and their memory (Leonard 2001 and Glucksman 1994).

As I conducted the interviews, I was aware that my respondents were limited in the knowledge they possessed about the recruitment, appointment and promotion of senior university managers because they are rarely consulted when these appointments are made and the criteria used are in most cases not made available to them. In addition to listening to the women managers narratives of their experiences I employed other methods such as marginal participant observation, document analysis and informal discussions to counter the shortcomings of relying on their accounts (See section 5.4).

I also interviewed men managers. The purpose of interviewing men was to find out how their experiences differed from women's and to explore the impact of gender on women's experiences. In the analysis of the experiences of the women I avoid using men's experiences/norms as managers as a

yardstick for describing women's experiences in similar positions. Evaluating women on the basis of male norms or experiences has been criticised by feminist critical analysts because this approach tends to portray women as the source of the problem and appear to suggest solutions that require women to become more like or better than men in order to succeed where men have succeeded (Bensimon and Marshall 1997).

Transformation of Institutions

Another feature of feminist critical policy analysis is to transform institutions. The goal of feminist critical policy analysis is to transform institutions and not add women. In relation to higher education institutions feminist critical policy analysts question the purpose of the academy's structures, practices and values in order to do away with or reform those that disadvantage women and others. It problematises the taken for granted practices such as the tenure systems, promotion and appointment criteria and job requirements. In this study I have problematised the appointment and promotion of managers in Kenyan universities as well as the socio-cultural expectations for men and women. In the conclusion of this thesis I suggest policy considerations that can be used to enhance women's participation in university management.

Influence of the theoretical framework on my research methods

In this section I discuss how the framework examined above influenced my research methods. Feminist critical policy analysis advocates and favours a qualitative research design to understanding women's lives as opposed to quantitative methods of inquiry (Bensimon and Marshall 1997). Feminist preference for qualitative research methods is based on the premise that dominant modes of doing research in the past (quantitative) were regarded by some feminists as inhibiting an understanding of women's experiences. Quantitative research (particularly surveys and questionnaires) are seen from a feminist perspective as representing a "masculinist form of knowing, where the emphasis is on the detachment of the researcher and the collection and

measurement of objective social facts through a (supposedly) value free form of data” (Maynard 1994, p.11).

Feminists in their criticism of quantitative research methods claim that the assumptions as to how actors structure their everyday worlds to be found within most questionnaires or interview schedules produce “falsely concrete bodies of data, which distort rather than reflect actors’ meaning” (Maynard *ibid*, p.11). Jayarante and Stewart (1991) argue that research practices that utilise either pre-coded or pre-closed categories are often of limited use when trying to understand women’s lives. This is because they are based on assumptions, often at an unrecognised and common-sense level, that the researcher is already sufficiently familiar with the phenomenon being investigated to be able to “specify, in advance, the full range of experiences being studied and how these can be encapsulated, categorised and measured. Feminists have argued that there are aspects to women’s lives, which cannot be pre-known or pre-defined in such a way” (p.86). Jayarante and Stewart (*ibid*) identify feminists’ criticisms of quantitative research methods as including:

- The selection of sexist and elitist research topics and the absence of research on questions of central importance to women.
- Biased research designs, including selection of only male subjects.
- An exploitative relationship between the researcher and the researched.
- The simplistic and superficial nature of quantitative data.
- Improper interpretations and over generalisations of findings.
- Inadequate data dissemination and utilisation (p.88).

In response to these criticisms, some feminist researchers recognised the need to develop research methodologies consistent with feminist values. There was a tendency among the early feminists to advocate the use of qualitative research methods as approaches which permitted women to express their experience fully and in their own terms (Maynard 1994). The most preferred qualitative research technique became the semi-structured or unstructured

interview. There was emphasis on the importance of listening to, recording and understanding women's own descriptions and accounts (Reinharz 1992 and Maynard 1994). They also preferred an ethnographic approach to research for three reasons. First, ethnography allowed feminist researchers to observe, to see women as full members of their social, economic and political worlds. Second, it enabled them to focus on women's lived experiences. Lastly, ethnography enabled feminist researchers to study women in their own contexts (Reinharz 1992, p.46).

Feminist arguments that all quantitative research methods were sexist were later questioned by some feminists who argued that these methods can generate useful information on the situation of women (Clegg 1985, Maynard 1994, Kelly, Burton and Reagan 1994, Oakley 1998a, 1998b and Stanley 2000). For example, Maynard (1994) argues that it is not quantification per se which is a problem but "naive quantification" (p.13). Maynard (ibid) stresses that quantitative studies have provided a significant contribution to feminist knowledge base. Kelly, Burton and Regan (1994) agree with Maynard (ibid) and add that the significance of violence in women's lives, for example, is underlined by quantitative studies showing the extent and severity of its incidence. Issues such as the feminisation of poverty and women's lack of progress in achieving equality, on a number of dimensions, with men in paid work also benefit from work which demonstrates the problem numerically. The anonymity accorded respondents by questionnaire as opposed to interviews has been found by some feminist researchers to generate more information especially when studying subjects considered being sensitive and distressing by the respondents.

Feminists use qualitative as well as quantitative research methods but from a critical realist approach. According to Robson (2002) a critical realist approach is "a version of realism that provides a rationale for evaluating critically the social practices one is studying in order to reveal the social construction of beliefs or actions" (p.41). Feminist researchers are critical of the way knowledge is produced, the way the research is carried out and the questions that are asked as well as the relationship between the researcher and

the researched. Kelly (1988) argues that what distinguishes feminist research from other forms of research is the questions they have asked, the way they locate themselves within their questions, and the purpose of their work. Stanley and Wise (1983) add that research methods in themselves aren't innately anything but the ways in which research participants are treated and the care with which researchers attempt to represent the lived experience of research participants are more central. Harding (1987) observes that feminist researchers use just about any and all of the methods that traditional researchers have used. But the way they carry out these methods of evidence gathering is often different. The two main characteristics of feminist research that distinguish it from other forms of research are reciprocity and reflexivity. I now examine these two characteristics and show how they influenced my research process.

Reciprocity

Feminist research is also critical of the ways in which previous sociological research has involved hierarchical power relationships where the researched are regarded as passive givers of information, with the researcher acting as a sponge soaking up the details provided (Maynard 1994, Oakley 1981 and Stanley and Wise 1993). To counter these weaknesses feminist researchers advocate for a genuine non-hierarchical relationship that encourages good rapport and a non-exploitative relationship, where the person being interviewed is not treated simply as a source of data. Feminists seek reciprocity in the research relationship and are sensitive to intrusion into women's lives or their participants in general.

However, feminist advocacy for non-hierarchical power relations in the research process is an ideal which is difficult to realise in practice (Skeggs 1994 and Coate 1999). Skeggs (1994) argues that the relationship between the researcher and the researched cannot be equal for two reasons. First, the researcher has the power to define the research situation and to interpret the contents of the interview in his or her own terms. Second, there are some sources of difference or inequality between the researcher and the researched, which are difficult to control. These include social class, age, academic and

professional qualification, ethnic background, social position, cultural background, knowledge of the subject matter of the study and institutional status. My age and limited experience in university management were sources of difference in my study. When interviewing the senior men and women managers I felt intimidated and nervous. The issue of unbalanced power relations became apparent when some of the managers questioned my interviewing techniques. Most of the interviewees preferred to respond to a questionnaire or interview guide (see section 5.6.1).

Reflexivity

One way in which feminists seek to achieve reciprocity in practice is by emphasising reflexivity in the research process. This means that the researcher's personal experiences are part of the research process (Ardovini-Brooker 2002, Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002, Stanley 2000, Maynard and Purvis 1994). Ramazanoglu and Holland (2002) define reflexivity in feminist research as "attempting to make explicit the power relations and the exercise of power in the research process" (p. 118). They note that reflexivity covers varying attempts by feminist researchers to evaluate critically how knowledge is produced, how the researcher is socially situated, and how the research agenda/process is constituted. According to Ramazanoglu and Holland (ibid) reflexivity is accomplished by a thoroughgoing review of the research setting and its participants, including an exploration of the researcher's reactions to doing the research. Making the researcher a subject in her or his own research requires feminist researchers to be open and honest about the research process so as to invite other voices to challenge the researcher's knowledge claims and conceptions of power (Ramazanoglu and Holland ibid).

Reflexivity is an important aspect of my study. I entered the interview situation as both an insider and outsider. As a Kenyan woman manager in a university (insider) I shared some of the experiences of my interviewees (see section 1.4). On some occasions the interviewees asked me to share my experiences on how I coped with some of the challenges they were facing. I also consider myself an outsider because I am trying to understand my personal experiences from a feminist perspective. Through my readings,

research and further education I have gained some consciousness, which put me in a different position from many of my interviewees and colleagues (men and women). My gender awareness enables me to perceive discrimination against women in the recruitment, appointment and promotion of university managers in Kenya. It makes me aware that women face challenges in their academic and management careers, which are different from men's. These challenges result from the traditional/cultural attitudes and gender roles, which place different expectations on men and women in the Kenyan society (see chapters 7 and 8). As I conducted the study I continually reflected on the fact that the interviewees did not share the gender awareness and knowledge that I have. Therefore, my outsider status gave me some advantages that the insiders did not have. Collins (1991) identifies three benefits of the outsider within status in a research setting. The first one is "greater objectivity". Collins notes that this is brought about by "a peculiar composition of nearness (familiarity) and remoteness and concern and indifference". The second benefit is "ability to see patterns insiders are too immersed to see". Collins (ibid) argues that it is the "outsider within" who is more likely to challenge the knowledge claims of insiders, to acknowledge the discrepancy between insiders' accounts of human behaviour and her own experiences and to identify anomalies. The last benefit of outsider within status is the tendency for people to confide in "a stranger" in ways they never would with each other (p.36). The "outsider within" status enables me to identify the gendered nature of some of the policies and practices in the appointment and promotion procedures of university managers. It also enables me to identify gender discrimination in some of these policies and practices that are not easily visible to the men and women managers interviewed in this study (see sections 6.2 and 8.2).

Therefore, I consider my study as feminist research because of the research question I asked, the purpose of my study, the way I gathered evidence and the way I located myself in the study.

4.4. Conclusion

In this chapter I have set out the theoretical framework for my study. I started the chapter by defining feminism as a movement geared towards ending sexist

oppression. I have also shown that feminism as a theory and a movement is not unified. For purposes of paying attention to the experiences of women in the Kenyan context, I have identified postcolonial feminism, Christian and African feminism as useful feminist perspectives. However, these three perspectives are inadequate in explaining the multilayered experiences of the women managers in Kenyan universities. I therefore opt to work from a feminist critical policy analysis perspective which I consider to be more encompassing. This framework influences my research question, methodology, the interpretations I make of the women managers experiences and the conclusions I draw. In the next chapter I explain how I went about gathering data for my study.

Chapter Five: Research Methods

5.1 Introduction

As indicated in chapter one the main research question that this study seeks to answer is: **What are the experiences of women managers in Kenyan universities?** In seeking an answer to this question I analyse the experiences of eight women and eight men occupying management positions in one public and one private university in Kenya. In the previous chapter I have explained the theoretical framework for my study and shown how it influences my research methodology. In this chapter I start by briefly discussing the research design I used. I then go on to describe the various stages I used to produce data for this study including how I gained access to the interviewees. I provide the background information of the interviewees and then move on to explain the techniques I used to gather the data. The techniques described include the Biographic Narrative Interpretative interview, marginal participant observation, document analysis and questionnaire. Towards the end of the chapter I reflect on the ethical issues that the methods I adopted in this study raised. I finish the chapter by explaining how I analysed the data obtained.

5.2 Research Design

As mentioned in the previous chapter (see section 4.3.4) the theoretical framework (feminist critical policy analysis) I draw on in this study advocates and defends a qualitative research design. Therefore my study is qualitative in nature. Among the strengths of a qualitative research design identified by Miles and Huberman (1994) that make it suitable for my study are that:

- It allows the researcher to collect data in close proximity to a specific situation so that the influences of the local context on the situation being studied are considered. This opens the possibility for understanding latent, underlying, or non-obvious issues.
- It allows for thick descriptions because the researcher is near to the context of the research.
- It allows for flexibility in the data production procedures as one can adapt the methods to the circumstances.

- The emphasis of qualitative research is on people's "lived experience". It allows the researcher to identify the meanings that people place on the events, processes, and structures of their lives (p. 145)

The strengths identified by Miles and Huberman (ibid) manifest themselves in my study at different points and in different forms. For example, I talked to and interviewed the managers in their work environment, I include thick descriptions in the analysis and my emphasis is on the interviewees' lived experiences. I was able to incorporate these strengths of qualitative research in my study by using a combination of ethnographic methods, that is, interviews; observation, document analysis, questionnaire and informal discussions (see section 5.4).

5.3 Data Production procedures

The data for this study was produced in stages so that the first type of data informed the next. The time spent in the field was 7 months and this led to a process of feeding new information back into the research questions and developing new insights, which could be incorporated into the interviews. This type of simultaneous collection and analysis of data is common with qualitative research (Burgess 1982, Miles and Huberman 1994, Wengraf 2001 and Robson 2002) and all the methods used were broadly informed by the qualitative tradition. The research process was informed by feminist research practice.

5.3.1 Pilot Interviews

The pilot interviews were exploratory in nature and were geared towards testing the research methods proposed for the main study. They were also aimed at exploring the general experiences and perceptions of the interviewees about women's participation in university management in Kenya. The theme that guided the pilot interviews was women's participation in university management. The topics covered in the interviews were women's general presence (numbers), career goals/development, challenges faced, attitudes/opinions towards the gender equity debate in general and in higher education management in particular, sources of

support/ coping strategies for those already in management and strategies for improving women's participation in university management.

Selection of interviewees for the pilot study

I conducted interviews with four people. The main criteria used to select the interviewees were their availability and willingness to talk about their experiences as managers in a university or an organisation. I knew all the interviewees except one. I met one of the interviewees at the 3rd European conference on Gender Equality in Higher Education held in Genoa, Italy on 13th –16th April 2003 where he presented a paper. Two of the interviewees (one woman and one man) were Kenyans working as managers in a university, one was Asian (man) and the other was English (woman). All the interviewees were informed that this was a pilot study and the fact that the information they shared was to be used for research only and it will only be shared with my supervisors. They were also asked for permission to have the interviews tape-recorded.

Methods used in the pilot interviews.

I adopted the career history approach, as an aspect of the life history approach, as used by feminists to explore the experiences of interviewee's as managers. The life history approach, also called the biographical method, is used in qualitative research to generate, analyse and present data based on an individual's personal experience over time. The approach assumes that social action can best be understood from the accounts and perspectives of the people involved and therefore the focus is on an individual's experiences of life (Schwandt 2001). Writing about the life history approach Morris (1999) notes that:

The life history approach reveals the inner life of the subject, to discover the ambiguities and contradictions that are seen in everyday experience... it seeks to establish a total picture of the participant's life and career, both personal and profession (p.344).

Middleton (1992) adds on to this by suggesting that the usefulness of the life history approach:

... lies in giving subjects the opportunity to interpret their own experiences, to understand how they have been shaped by the dominant culture, by 'analysing the relationship between their individual biographies, historical events, and the constraints imposed on their personal choices by broader power relations, such as those of race, class and gender (p.19).

I chose to use this approach after realising that women's status in society and in the university in particular is shaped by multiple factors (for example culture, personal perceptions, colonialism, and tribalism). I hoped that by listening to the career experiences of the men and women interviewed I would be able to pick up issues that have played a prominent role in determining women's participation in university management. I also hoped that by reflecting on their careers, family backgrounds, education and challenges, the interviewees would gain insights into the gendered nature of their choices which otherwise they might have not thought about previously (Fonow and Cook 1991).

The interviewees were requested to talk about their career experiences focusing on various aspects such as family background, early career, and experience in management, challenges faced and career goals. Each interview lasted between 30 minutes and one hour. The purpose of seeking information on the private lives (family background) of the interviewees was motivated by research findings elsewhere showing that in their search for well rounded lives, women managers make choices relating to family and career which influence their success in both spheres (Marshall 1984 and Fagenson 1993).

However, as I used the life history approach I did not lose sight of its limitation as alluded to by Woods (1987) who warns that:

...the life history approach may not yield the same results especially when used with the powerful, because 'part of their power resides in their control of information (including information about themselves) and the public identity they choose to present (p. 124).

My intention was to make the pilot interviews unstructured but this proved difficult as most interviewees insisted on being asked questions to guide the conversations. I asked open-ended questions, which were followed by probes based on the responses of the interviewee. I introduced certain themes/topics when I realized that they were not coming out during the conversations. The interviews were tape-recorded and I took some notes as well. The interviews were transcribed verbatim. After transcribing I studied each transcript for recurrent themes, which were related to the research theme. From the pilot interviews a number of themes emerged related to how women get into management positions, challenges they face while in management, factors affecting their participation and coping strategies that women managers develop to enable them survive in management. After analysing data from the pilot interviews I decided to explore these themes further in the main study by focusing on the experiences of women managers in one public and one private university in Kenya. As a result of the pilot study I learnt that:

- The life history approach can generate a lot of data if the respondents are willing to narrate their stories. At the same time some interviewees do not feel comfortable talking about their private lives. This was the case with the two men interviewed for the pilot study.
- Interviewing people known to you has its advantages and disadvantages. One of the advantages is that as the interviewer you are relaxed and the anxiety and nervousness is reduced. This was the case when I was interviewing the three interviewees known to me. On the other hand interviewing people known to you can prevent some people from 'telling it like it is' (Holloway and Jefferson 2000).
- One interview was not sufficient in getting as much information as possible. The fact that the interviewees remembered some things when the tape recorder had been switched off or the day after revealed this. I also learnt from the interview transcripts that I needed to follow up some issues further during the interview but I had not, maybe because I did not realize their importance at the time or they

may have skipped my attention. For this reason I decided to adopt multiple interviews during the main study.

5.3.2 Participation in Conferences and seminars

Another aspect of the data production process involved participation in various conferences and seminars on gender equality in higher education. The main conferences and seminars attended during the research process include:

- Third European Conference on Gender Equality in Higher Education held on 9th- 13th April 2003 in Genoa, Italy.
- Australian Technology Network (ATN) WEXDEV 2003 Research Conference: Re-searching Research Agendas: Women, Research and Publication in Higher Education held on 25th –27th June 2003 at Curtin University of Technology, Perth, Western Australia.
- Beyond Access: Project Seminar sponsored by DFID and Oxfam UK held on 2nd –3rd February 2004 at Jacaranda Hotel, Nairobi, Kenya.
- Understanding Gender Inequalities: an International Gender Conference organised by the Centre for Women Studies and Gender Analysis, Egerton University, Kenya in collaboration with the Department of Comparative Education, University of Hull; United Kingdom, British Council DFID Higher Education Link and UNDP-Kenya held on 5th- 8th April 2004 at Egerton University, Njoro, Kenya.
- Sustainable Gender Relations a seminar organised by the Research Department of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa held on 6th June 2004.
- Gender Mainstreaming at Universities: Developing a Common Strategy for Kenya: A workshop organised by the World Bank Institute and Kenyatta University held on 24th-26th June 2004 at Utalii Hotel, Nairobi, Kenya.
- Women as Global Leaders: Educating the next Generation: An international conference organised by Zayed University, held on 14th -16th March 2005, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

These conferences and seminars provided data on the issues and concerns surrounding the participation of women in higher education management. During the conferences I interacted and held informal talks/ interviews with women who held senior management positions at various universities in North America, Canada, Europe, Asia, Australia, Africa and Kenya. The conferences and seminars provided a very informal way of talking to the senior women managers who may have been difficult to access in a formal research setting. I also gathered information on some of the strategies being implemented in various countries to enhance the participation of women in higher education both as academics and managers.

The conferences also gave me an opportunity to access the most current literature and research findings in the field. I also met and shared experiences with other research students who were doing research in the area. Discussions on feminist research methodologies at these conferences shed more light on the challenges involved in conducting feminist research. Listening to the experiences of other women researchers gave me some confidence that helped me to cope with some of the challenges I faced during my fieldwork.

I presented papers related to my research question at these conferences and this gave me an opportunity to share my ideas and obtain feedback from the participants on some of the issues I was interested in exploring. This helped me to focus my research question.

From the conferences I realized that my research question was an area of concern for researchers in higher education. The paucity of research on women from Africa and Kenya in particular in this area was revealed by the fact that there were very few women from Africa participating in most of these conferences especially those held outside the region. Therefore, the research findings shared at the conferences and seminars were predominantly from Australia, Europe, North America and Canada. Even when the conferences were held in Africa, the main focus was on girls'

access to basic education and very little research was reported in the subject of women's participation in university management.

5.3.3 Fieldwork

Another stage of the data production involved the fieldwork, which lasted for a period of seven months. In this section I describe how the fieldwork was carried out.

Selection of research sites

The study was carried out in one public and one private university in Kenya. The main reasons for selecting these two institutions were mainly practical that is, their accessibility in terms of location during the fieldwork. Since there was no adequate funding for the study it would have been expensive to travel far distances to conduct the interviews. Again, the nature of the research method (ethnography, multiple interviews and observations) influenced the choice of the universities.

The main justification for choosing a public and a private university lies in the understanding that not all institutions are the same and that factors such as location and sponsor can bring about differences in the women's experiences as managers (Ward and Wolf-Wendel 2004). Because there are different policies and practices governing the appointment and promotion of university managers in the public and private universities in Kenya (see sections 3.3.1 and 3.3.2) I considered it necessary to include one public and one private university. Again, the private university was included in the study because, first, private universities in Kenya attract more women both as students, academic and administrative staff, I thought it would be useful to find out whether the private universities provide a conducive environment for women. Moreover some of the private universities have slightly more women occupying senior management positions (for example vice chancellor) than public universities in Kenya. The second reason why I included a private university is that I work in one and therefore I wanted to explore the experiences of other women in a similar setting as mine.

Various types of data were collected from these institutions. I made two visits per week to the two universities for the duration of the fieldwork. During these visits I formed impressions about each institution's organisational culture and management style. I jotted down these impressions in my field notes and this often complemented the interviewees' narratives about the work environment. I also jotted down incidents that occurred while arranging appointments with the interviewees, traveling to and from the institutions, conducting interviews and corresponding with respondents.

Because of ethical concerns (anonymity) I have chosen not to include institutional profiles of the two universities. Given the few numbers of chartered public (6) and private (6) universities in Kenya, too much detail could compromise anonymity and possibly lead to identification of the universities.

Sampling and access to participants.

The participants were selected using purposive sampling. The main criterion used to select them was the fact that they were occupying a management position in their university. I got access to the interviewees in the public and private university through contact persons (managers in the university) known to me. I avoided the formal process of gaining access to the participants for two reasons. First I intended that the interviews be informal, confidential and based on the trust between the managers and myself (Reis 2002). Second, seeking formal permission from the government and university authorities could have delayed the research process. My experience in the past has been that it takes up to six months to obtain government and university permission to conduct research in public institutions (Onsongo 2002). So to avoid delays I went to my contact persons and explained my research and sought their assistance in identifying key informants and getting access to them. The fact that the contact persons knew me very well made it possible for them to provide as much

information as possible to the interviewees about me before I met them. I gave the contact persons an introductory letter from my supervisor and myself addressed to prospective interviewees and told them to get in touch with them and fix a date for our first meeting. This approach worked very well for me because the contact persons were able to fix appointments with very senior managers whom I could have not got access to on my own.

Skrtic, (1985) warns that this process of identifying participants is likely to introduce unknown biases into the selection process. For example, my contact persons may have selected their friends to participate in the interviews. To counter these likely biases, as the research progressed and after I had known my way round the institutions I was able to approach other informants on my own.

Once the dates had been fixed I met the interviewees and they received me very well. The seniority of my contact persons and the respect they enjoyed among their colleagues contributed to the good reception. Other factors that may have contributed to the good reception initially from the interviewees include; first, the fact that I was a lecturer in a local university gave me some colleague status. So, some interviewees received me as a colleague. Second, most interviewees respected my student status. Punch (1994) observes that “a young student... may be perceived as non-threatening and may even elicit a considerable measure of sympathy from respondents” (p.87)

Also the fact that I was studying abroad made some interviewees respect me. Some of them had obtained their doctoral degrees from overseas and somehow this made them very considerate. In fact two interviewees (a man and a woman) were alumni of the University of London and they really got excited when they met me. They told me about their experience as students in the UK and we spent some time talking about studying in the UK. This created some bond and therefore some rapport was established. For the interviewees in the private university, most of whom had not obtained their doctoral degrees, meeting me provided them with an opportunity to find out how I managed to get sponsorship and admission for my studies. An

introductory letter from my supervisors was also useful in making the interviewees receive me well.

All the interviews except one took place in the interviewees' offices and therefore were very formal in nature. I conducted them in their offices for two main reasons. One, their seniority made me fear suggesting interviewing them outside their offices (most senior managers in Kenya are very formal and therefore I did not imagine how they would take a suggestion to be interviewed over a cup of coffee for example, or even outside office hours especially the men managers). Another reason is that I was very keen on studying the interviewees in their natural settings so as to be able to observe the office trappings (size, wall posters, and organisation) and their management style. For most of them this was the only opportunity I had to observe their management style. One interview took place at a conference venue because this was the only time that the interviewee had to spare. The conference lasted four days and I attended all days to be able to have more interaction with the interviewee and conduct the follow up interviews.

Background information on the participants

The participants for the field interviews were eight men and eight women who were holding management positions in their universities. All the interviewees except two were Kenyans. The non-Kenyans were missionaries, one white woman and one black man. Again because women are a minority within university management in Kenya, I have avoided including demographic details that are likely to compromise their anonymity and possibly lead to their identification. For the same reason, I avoid making reference to the management positions they hold and any other information that can lead to identification of the interviewees. All the interviewee's names have been changed. The background information is summarised in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4: Personal information of participants.

Pseudonym	Institution	Sex	Age	Marital status
Albert	Public	Male	40-45	Married
Arnold	Private	Male	50-55	Married
Beatrice	Public	Female	40-45	Married
Claire	Private	Female	45-50	Married
Connex	Private	Female	50-55	Married
Derrick	Private	Male	50-55	Single
Edna	Public	Female	40-45	Married
Eunice	Private	Female	30-35	Single
Geoffrey	Public	Male	45-50	Married
Gordon	Public	Male	50-55	Married
Ian	Private	Male	35-40	Married
Kristine	Public	Female	40-45	Married
Natasha	Private	Female	40-45	Single
Richard	Private	Male	50-55	Married
Ronald	Public	Male	50-55	Single
Sofia	Public	Female	40-45	Married

The information in Table 4 shows that five of the women managers were in their early forties, one woman was in her early thirties, and another woman was in her mid forties. Only one woman was in her early fifties. Five of the men interviewed were in their early fifties. One man was in his early forties and another in his mid forties. Only one man was in his mid thirties.

Marital status was considered important in this study because part of the research question involved finding out how the women managers were able to combine their personal and professional roles. After listening to stories from married men and women I thought it was necessary to look for single men and women managers in order to find out whether their experiences were different. The single women and men in this study were purposively selected to be able to make this comparison. Majority of the interviewees (6 men and 6 women) were married with children. Three men and three women had grown up children while the remaining had young children. One of the single men was a priest and the other had never married. One of the single women was a widow with children and the other had never married.

Table 5: Career information of participants

Pseudonym	Institution	Academic Qualification	Working experience	Management Experience
Albert	Public	PhD	13	2
Arnold	Private	Masters	15	11
Beatrice	Public	PhD	16	6
Claire	Private	PhD	15	5
Connex	Private	Masters	6	5
Derrick	Private	PhD	7	7
Edna	Public	PhD	15	8
Eunice	Private	Masters	6	3
Geoffrey	Public	PhD	10	2
Gordon	Public	PhD	16	7
Ian	Private	Masters	7	6
Kristine	Public	PhD	16	2
Natasha	Private	Masters	4	2
Richard	Private	Masters	26	26
Ronald	Public	PhD	14	3
Sofia	Public	PhD	14	1

Table 5 shows that the majority of the interviewees (5 men and 6 women) had obtained a PhD as the highest academic qualification. Three men and two women in the private university had attained masters degrees as their highest academic qualification. In the public university a PhD is considered necessary for one to be appointed to a senior management position. So, all the managers in the public university had a PhD as their highest academic qualification. Four of the five Kenyan women had obtained their PhDs locally while one had obtained it from abroad. The other woman with a PhD was the white missionary. On the other hand two of the Kenyan men with PhDs had obtained them locally while the other two obtained them from abroad. The other man with a PhD was the missionary and he had obtained it from abroad.

Most of interviewees (6 men and 5 women) had worked in the university for a period of between 5 and 15 years. Some of the managers in the public university (3) had been working there for about 10- 15 years. One man and two women had worked in the public university for over 15 years. One man

in the private university had worked in universities for over 20 years. The data appears to suggest that the women and men interviewed had worked in the university as academic staff for the same duration.

Half of the women had management experience in their respective universities of between one and three years while half of the men had a management experience of between three and seven years. Three women had a management experience of between three and seven years. The longest serving manager (26 years) started his career as an administrator in a public university where he worked for 18 years before moving to the private university where he has been for a period of eight years. These data appears to suggest that the women interviewed in this study took longer to be appointed to senior management positions in spite of having been in university teaching/ working for the same duration as the men interviewed.

5.4 Data production techniques

5.4.1 Interviews

Interviews were the main data production technique used in this study. I preferred this technique because I wanted to hear the stories of the women managers based on their own contexts and understanding of their lived experiences (Reinharz 1992, Lofland and lofland 1995, Kvale 1996 and Wengraf 2001). In order to give the respondents freedom and more space to share their experiences I used the Biographic Narrative Interpretative interview (BNI) as outlined by Wengraf (2001). This is a common interview technique in the life history approach. This technique uses one single question at the beginning of the interview, which is aimed at inducing a narrative from the respondent. There is minimum intervention from the interviewer. So, I identified the general areas I wanted to cover during the interviews and then let the interviewees to speak freely in their own terms about these areas and introduce additional issues that were of concern to them. Their responses determined the order in which the areas/topic were

discussed and the time spent on each The Biographic Narrative Interpretative interview has three interviews as follows:

Interview 1

During this first interview, the interviewer asks a single initial question designed to elicit the full narrative. The interviewee is encouraged to answer this question with if necessary, reassurance and prompts for more story. As the story is narrated the interviewer listens and takes down notes. The aim of the initial single question is to assist respondents to say more about their lives without at the same time offering interpretations, judgments or otherwise imposing the interviewers own relevancies (Rosenthal 1991). The initial narration continues until the interviewee indicates clearly that they have no more to say. The initial question can be conceptually focused on a “phase of life or a specific biographical strand for example professional career or family history” (Wengraf 2001, p.121).

In this study I asked all interviewees one question at the beginning which was aimed at inducing a narrative about their career history and their experiences as managers. The question I asked them was:

I would like you to describe your career history since you started working at this university, telling me the factors that have helped you to rise to the current position, the challenges you have faced and how you have overcome them. You may start wherever you like and take the time you need I will not interrupt you. I will listen and take notes for afterwards. You may start now.

During the field interviews, the first interview also served as an introduction of the research and myself to the interviewees. I used the session to explain the purpose and nature of the research to the respondents and telling them why they had been selected. I gave them assurance that they will remain anonymous in any written reports because their names, name of the university and the positions they occupied would not be revealed. I also told them that they should share only experiences that they were comfortable in sharing. I emphasized the fact that I was interested in their lived experiences

as individuals and what they can remember and therefore there were no right or wrong answers. I asked them for permission to tape record the interview.

Interviewees' response to the interview technique

After explaining the purpose and nature of the study to them, I invited them to ask questions and seek any clarifications. Most interviewees raised questions regarding the interview technique (unstructured) and the taping of the interviews. The approach to interviewing was found strange by most interviewees who are used to being given questionnaires to fill in or being asked questions to which they give answers. At the beginning I had difficulties explaining the fact that I did not have an interview guide or questionnaire to which they would respond at their own time. It was a bit hard to get the interview started, as most interviewees demanded that they be given the question in advance so that they can prepare themselves. I told them that they did not need any preparation for the interview but some seemed very uncomfortable with this approach. In fact one male manager kept me waiting at the reception for one hour as he went into his office probably to prepare himself. I realised that he had been preparing himself when I entered the office and found that he had assembled some files on his table related to his management responsibility and he occasionally referred to them during the interview.

Tape recording interviews

Another area of concern for the interviewees was the idea of tape recording the interviews. Most of the interviewees were reluctant to have their interviews taped initially. When I tried to inquire why they gave various reasons. Some said they did not want somebody else to listen to the recorded tapes. For example, Ronald was more concerned that somebody else would listen to the tape. My recollection of the conversation with Ronald is as follows:

Ronald: The problem with taping is that somebody else can listen to it.

Jane: No, nobody else will have access to the tape because I will transcribe the interviews myself and after the report has been written I will destroy them.

Ronald: No no you cannot guarantee that, you cannot. There is no way you can guarantee that (Field notes).

After this argument the interviewee seemed to give up and he accepted to be taped anyway. I felt disempowered by this strong argument and wondered how else I would assure him. One interviewee (Geoffrey) was suspicious that the information would be used for imperialist purposes since I was studying abroad. He argued that if I taped him the British would get to listen to all the problems managers in Kenyan universities were facing and they would use this to come up with neocolonialist policies which would be disguised as foreign aid geared towards improving university management. The interviewees were giving these reasons after I had assured them that the information they shared was going to be strictly confidential and they will remain anonymous when the research report will be written.

However, one woman manager refused to have her interview taped in spite of the assurance of confidentiality and anonymity. Because I considered her as a key informant I agreed to take notes. I tried to write as much as I could but I found that the taped interviews were easy to follow and I was able to get more information resulting in 10 single spaced pages of transcript. But for the woman whose interview I did not tape I managed a two page single spaced transcript for an interview lasting about an hour. When I returned the transcript to her she disowned most of what she had said during the interview and accused me of exaggerating on some of the issues. Upon receiving her transcript and reading it, she rang my contact person after office hours (6.00 pm) to raise her concerns. I learnt from the contact person that the woman had expressed fears that if the experiences she had shared during the interview, even though true, got published, will give a wrong impression about her and the institution. My contact person called me and told me to see her immediately in order to clarify some of the issues she was raising. When I went to her office I found that she had left the corrected transcript with her secretary. She had cancelled most of the things and if the

corrections she suggested were to be followed then I would be left with half a page of her transcript.

I made several visits to her office to try and explain myself and apologise for any mistake that I may have made. But I was not able to meet her as she was always in meetings or on official travel outside the country. After trying to make an appointment for nearly two months I gave up.

I was surprised when I received a telephone call from her secretary after three months asking me what I had done with the transcript. This telephone call made me realise how the woman had been concerned about her experiences getting to the public domain. When I enquired from my contact person why she made the telephone call, I found that another woman researcher from the US had gone to ask for an interview from her. The woman manager told this researcher that she was not keen of being interviewed because of her experience with me. The telephone call from her secretary gave me the opportunity to explain that since it had been difficult to meet her in order to clarify some of the issues she was raising, I had decided to drop her from the study and therefore destroyed the transcript and no reference would be made to her experiences in the study. I sent her an email explaining this position. It is only after my response that she accepted to be interviewed by the woman from the US. But she also refused to have the interview taped. I have narrated this experience here because it really traumatised me during the early days of the fieldwork. I did not know whether to continue tape recording the interviews. The experience also made me wonder whether returning transcripts to interviews was a good idea. After consultation with my supervisors and research colleagues I resolved to insist on tape recording all the interviews in order to avoid similar situations where interviewees disown what they had shared during the interviews. I also continued returning the transcripts to the interviewees.

So the issue of taping the interviews created some discomfort at the beginning for most interviewees but after explaining why I was taping them, they accepted to be taped. But I suspect the taping may have influenced the

extent to which they told their whole story. I discovered this when I was mixing with them at the seminars and workshops and having informal discussions with some of them. Some told me things related to their personal career development that they had not talked about during the formal interviews.

Follow up to interview 1

In the Biographic Narrative Interpretative interview this follow up to interview 1 is geared towards extracting more narration based on the topics raised during narration (Wengraf 2001). The interviewer asks only story eliciting questions following strictly the order in which they were raised and using the words (language, key words and phrases) of the interviewee in respect of those topics. The interviewer continues to note the topics as they arise, for yet further follow-up questioning. Wengraf (2001) suggests that this session should be done on the same day or in a follow up interview as soon as possible. During the field interviews this session followed immediately the interviewees had finishing narrating their stories. I asked them questions based on what they had said using their words/language. I also introduced some topics related to the participation of women in university management that had not been raised by the interviewees because I was not sure whether I would meet them again.

Interview 2

According to Wengraf (ibid) this is a separate interview. To prepare for this session the interviewer needs to have done preliminary analysis of the material gathered in interview 1. At this point the interview becomes completely structured by the interviewers concerns. Any questions can be asked about topics not mentioned in the first interview.

I conducted the second interview after I had transcribed the first interviews and given the transcripts back to the respondents for member checking and comments. Of the 16 interviews, 11 transcripts were read and returned by the interviewees. The interviewees agreed that the transcripts were a true

reflection of what was shared during the interview. I tried to make a follow up with the other five interviewees but I did not manage to meet them again. As I waited for interviewees to read and comment on the transcripts I studied them carefully and identified some sections or issues which I needed some clarification or to probe further during the second and third interviews.

My intention was to conduct the second interviews as soon as possible. However, this was not possible because some interviewees were not available for interview until after one or two months after the first interviews. This was especially the case in the public university where the first interviews had been conducted when the university was closed due to the academic staff industrial action between November 2003 and March 2004. When the university reopened in March 2004 the managers became very busy trying to reorganise the disrupted academic programmes. As result, they were not able to read the transcripts soon after I had returned them (February 2004). And when they were finally able to meet me for the second interview most of them had forgotten what they had said during the first interview. So, we had to go through the transcript together or refer to a specific page whenever I sought some clarification on what they had said earlier. The process of reminding them the context or going through the transcripts with them was time consuming. On the whole the interviewees seemed unfamiliar with the practice of having the transcripts returned to them.

Interview 3

After conducting the second interviews, a third interview was conducted with most of the women interviewees towards the end of the fieldwork (June–July 2004). The purpose of this interview was to find out whether the interviewees had experienced or remembered anything related to the study that they would like to share. I used this opportunity to thank them for their time and cooperation during the fieldwork.

A total of 8 men and 8 women managers in one public and one private university were interviewed. The distribution among the universities is as follows: public university four men and four women and in the private university four men and four women. The initial goal was to do a minimum of 3 interviews with each respondent. However, this was only possible with 11 interviewees. It was difficult to get five men for the second and third interviews as they become very busy or were not keen on being interviewed again. However, this is not likely to have an impact on the data produced for this study because I made every effort during the first interviews to gather as much information as possible. And even when I was not able to interview them again, I gathered more data about them through marginal participant observation and personal documents.

The first interviews lasted anywhere between 45 minutes and two hours. The follow up interview lasted between 30 minutes and one hour. All the interviews were conducted in English. However occasionally the interviewees used Swahili [national language] whenever they wanted to emphasis a point or talk about something emotional. All the interviews were taped and I transcribed them verbatim.

The approach to interviewing adopted in this study was beneficial in several ways. First, allowing the respondents to respond to the initial question freely and at their own pace gave them the freedom to choose how, when and in which context they introduced relevant aspects of their personal experience during the narration (Wengraf 2001). Second, the multiple nature of the interviews gave me the opportunity to ask additional questions and get corrective feedback on information obtained during the first interview. The returning of the transcripts and follow up interviews provided the interviewees with an opportunity to read their transcripts and correct, qualify or add anything to the information they provided in the first interview. (Reinharz 1992)

The biographic narrative Interpretative interview has some constraints as well, which are also related to the life history approach. The first one is that

the quality and validity of the information that is obtained by the use of this technique depends to a large extent on the interviewees' willingness to tell all the truths and their knowing the full story. In some cases the interviewee may choose to present "a self image geared towards protecting their true identity" (Wengraf 2001, p.117). This is especially the case when research is done in academic contexts where people may be keen to protect their personal, institutional and occupational prestige and reputation because of organisational and professional loyalties (Alvesson 2003).

Indeed when listening to the stories of the women and men managers sometimes I came across contradictions resulting mainly from the images the interviewees wanted to portray of themselves. For example, I decided to interview Sofia because my contact person told me that she was the only single woman in the public university who was occupying a management position. However, during the interview, Sofia told me that she was married and emphasised the support she was getting from her husband. Her story appeared to contradict what her colleagues knew and what she had published about her marital status.

The second constraint of this approach is that the narrator may choose to digress from the subject of the interview and the interviewer may find it hard to provide direction given that his or her role is to listen and take notes for later discussion. As a result of digression a lot of time may be lost (Wengraf 2001). There were many occasions during the interviews when the interviewees especially men digressed from the subject of the interview because they did not want to answer the questions I asked them directly. But because I had told them that I would not interrupt them I kept on listening until they had finished their narration. In the process I got emotionally exhausted and ended up with several pages of transcript containing information that was not related to my research question. To overcome some of these constraints and enhance validity of the data I complemented the stories they told me with the information I gathered from observations, questionnaires, documents and informal conversations.

5.4.2. Documents

Reinharz (1992) notes that feminists have found analysis of personal and public documents useful in understanding women's experiences. In addition to interviewing I asked the interviewees for their personal documents such as curriculum vitae (CVs) to enable me compare their narratives with their documented career history and other activities. I was able to get CVs from 10 (5 women and 5 men) of the interviewees and I really appreciate their generosity in this regard. The other six (3 men and 3 women) did not give me because they had not updated them. They told me to collect them in the follow up interview but this was not possible because they kept on telling me that they were not ready.

I also requested for their office diaries to enable me get a feel of their daily routine and experiences. However, this was not very fruitful, as most managers did not keep office diaries. When I enquired why various reasons were given. Some said there was no point of keeping a diary because most times the meetings they attend are called in a very ad hoc manner or at very short notice. So most of the managers especially those in the public university did not work according to a pre-planned schedule. I argue later in the thesis that the disorganised or ad hoc culture especially in the public university has implications on women's participation in university management in Kenya (see section 7.3).

Others said that they had a very good memory and were able to remember what they were supposed to do at what time. Even the few who had the office diaries did not record all the activities they were taking part in each day. They only recorded major meetings like the senate, departmental meetings and faculty boards meetings. In fact some interviewees did not even record my appointment with them in their diaries and as result I turned up for the interview only to find that they were not in their offices and even their secretaries were not aware of their whereabouts. In the process I would be kept waiting for even up to two hours only to realise that the interviewees were attending another meeting or were not on campus. Some of them felt

guilty that they had not kept their appointments and asked for my contacts so that they would call me when they were next available but of course they never called even after two to three months. This experience was common with interviewees in the public university. I found this experience very discouraging and I had to give up on about four prospective interviewees that had been identified by my contact person. I replaced them with others who were available.

From the interviewee's curriculum vitae and office diaries I was able to complement the information gathered through interviews. I also gathered documentation for content analysis that included university calendars, university statutes, handbooks, promotion criteria, newsletters, pamphlets and flyers. I searched these documents for organisational policies and practices governing appointment of university managers, events and activities taking place on campus related to my research that I could attend.

In addition I kept a fieldwork diary in which I noted and recorded concerns, particular questions and impressions before and after the interview. I viewed all contacts with the interviewees even outside their places of work as potential data sources hence recorded everything. All these data are therefore used in exploring and interpreting these women's experiences as managers.

5.4. 3 Observation

Another technique I used to produce data for this study was covert or marginal participant observation. Robson (2002) identifies the role of marginal participant observer as one of "having a lower degree of participation, that is, adopting the role of a largely passive, though completely accepted, participant for example, a passenger in a train or bus or a member of the audience" (p.318). I was an accepted participant because at the beginning of the interviews, I sought the interviewees' permission to observe their professional daily routine, general departmental atmosphere, events, meetings or workshops being run by them that would not interfere with their privacy and confidentiality. This permission was granted by all the interviewees (men and women) and they introduced me to their secretaries

and asked them to allow me to sit in the reception area and give me any public documents (e.g. office diaries, schedule of meetings and seminars) that I would need for the purpose of my study.

I chose to use covert observation for two main reasons. First, I wanted to observe events, conversations, behaviour as it occurred “naturally”. I suspected that if I was involved in direct participant observation then the interviewees and the support staff would alter their behaviour in order to please me or give “a correct impression or image” of themselves or their department (Robson 2002, p.68). Another reason for using covert observation is that I did not have official clearance from the two universities to conduct the study (see section 5.3.3).

So during my visits to the interviewees’ offices I took the role of marginal participant in the reception area. For example, when waiting to see the manager or for an interview, I took covert notes on who was in the reception area, what enquiries people were making in the office, how the secretaries were attending to people who came in, any unusual details of the physical scene, posters, notices, any interesting or important comments and conversations. The secretary’s conversations about their managers and their work environment were also noted down. These notes gave me an idea of the management style and the culture in the universities in general and the particular office I was visiting. As I sat at the reception area or hung around campus, I asked questions about the activities taking place that were related to my research. I also had opportunistic “*on wing*” discussions or informal interviews with individuals around the office or in the university (Robson 2002, p.318). I avoided taking covert notes where informal conversations with colleagues (academic and support staff) in the two universities were involved.

Another aspect of the observation was attending public forums in which interviewees were participating to gather more information about them. Three women and three men in the public university allowed me to attend conferences, seminars where they were presenting papers and meetings

(public) they were chairing. A total of four conferences, three seminars and one meeting were attended where the interviewees were taking part during the fieldwork. For purposes of maintaining confidentiality these seminars and conferences cannot be specified here.

At the conferences and seminars I had an opportunity to observe the attitudes of the participants towards gender issues in the society in general and in the university in particular. I was also able to find out the extent to which gender issues were occupying the themes or the talk of the conferences and seminars. During the conference /seminar presentations the interviewees sometimes narrated their personal life experiences to illustrate a point which they had not narrated to me during the formal interviews. I also heard people some of whom had worked and interacted with the interviewees for a longer time, talk about them and some personal stories came out in the process that enriched my data.

There are ethical issues raised by the covert observation I used in this study. The first one is that the interviewees and most of the people I observed and had informal conversations were in most cases not aware that I was observing them. This raised some ethical concerns for me because sometimes I was not sure whether to use the data obtained during these observations. It implies that I was using some of them (e.g. secretaries and other academic colleagues) as research participants without their informed consent (see section 5.62).

Another ethical issues raised by covert observations is the fact that I avoided taking overt notes during the observations. I wrote most of my observation notes after leaving the interviewees' office. There are possibilities of forgetting the actual conversations and this can lead to selective recording which is likely to lead to biased accounts (Robson 2002). Again I did not share my observation notes with the interviewees. However, in cases where I observed something that I considered important to my research question, I cross-checked my observations with the interviewees, support staff and other academics during formal and informal conversations. I did this by asking

them such questions: I have observed that in this department, university or institute that there are/is... is this something common or why is this so or what is your experience?

However, in spite of the ethical issues raised by covert observation provided me with rich qualitative data that greatly enhanced my understanding of the organisational culture, the women and men's views and perceptions on women's participation in public decision making in the Kenyan society in general and university management in particular. I also used the data obtained from the observations to corroborate the interviewees' narratives and their lived experiences as managers.

5.4.4 Background Information questionnaire

At the end of each interview I collected background information by asking the men and women to complete a brief questionnaire on their age, academic degree, marital status, and other positions previously held at the university, number of years in university teaching and number of years in the current positions and their membership to university boards and committees (see Appendix B).

5.5 Validity

The techniques used in this study to establish the credibility (or truth value) of the data were thick description, triangulation and member checks. I now discuss how each of these was done in this study to enhance the validity of the data produced.

Thick Description

During the fieldwork I followed the advice given by Wolcott (1990) of talking little and listening a lot, recording accurately, writing early, offering informed interpretation, reporting fully, being candid, seeking feedback and writing accurately. This enabled me to collect a lot of data that I use in describing the experiences of the women. In presenting the data I try as much as possible to describe the context and the experiences of the interviewees in their own words. The thick description was useful in keeping

the analysis true to the data by quoting study participant's own accounts of their lives.

Methods triangulation

Methods triangulation involves the use of multiple research methods in a single study so that one type of data verifies or supplements another, providing for a more accurate interpretation (Lincoln and Denzin 1994, Creswell 1994 and. Robson 2002). I began with the Biographic Narrative Interpretative interview, which was the primary research method and continued with the collection of documents (CV and office diaries, meetings schedules, teaching timetable). The interviewees were also observed before, during and after the interviews. Informal talks with other people working with the respondents also helped me to understand the culture of the organisation in which the women were working in and the general views or attitudes towards women in leadership positions in the two institutions. Nonverbal cues were also used as a base for reinforcing or questioning information gathered verbally. For verification purposes, I compared interview findings with those from the background information questionnaire, curriculum vitae, office diary, observation and printed documents about the university to confirm factual data such as the number of years worked in the university.

Peer debriefing and support

Peer debriefing and support was used during periods in the field (Robson 2002). There was a woman studying for her PhD in Europe attached to my university who was carrying out her fieldwork at the same time. We offered each other a lot of support during the fieldwork. We met once a week and shared our field experiences. I found this very useful. We organised seminars at my university where we presented our research proposals at the beginning of the fieldwork and later our preliminary findings. These seminars were a very useful source of feedback. I also shared my field experiences with my research colleagues at the Centre for the Advancement

of Learning and Teaching, University College London through email and they all provided wonderful support.

Members Checks

Skrtic (1985) observes that the purpose of member checks is to give the respondents an opportunity to tell the researcher whether “you got it right”, and also the researcher gets an opportunity to test whether “You gave it to me right” (p. 208).

Member checks were also carried out. This occurred during the interview by seeking clarifications from the interviewee on some of the issues they had talked about. From interview to interview (1st, 2nd and 3rd) and from one respondent to another. For example, I asked the interviewees: “Some of the women I have talked to have said.... what is your experience on this or what would be your comment?” And also it occurred from one university to another by asking respondents from other universities such questions as “the respondents in the public university experience this is the case in your university?”

I also organised a dissemination seminar half way through my fieldwork in my university where about 22 members of academic staff participated. Two senior members of academic staff, one a visiting woman senior lecturer from the University of Zambia and a male senior lecturer from a public university were given the paper on the preliminary findings in advance to read and respond. An abstract was circulated in advance for the other seminar participants. The seminar participants were encouraged to give constructive criticisms. This seminar presentation was very useful in helping me to identify some issues that needed to be investigated further in the subsequent interviews.

Using all these levels of member checks during the fieldwork and data analysis enabled me to continuously build credibility into my data. Information was checked and rechecked with the same and different

respondents as well as being triangulated with other data sources and methods.

5.6 Ethical Concerns

Ethical issues in social science research are concerned with safeguarding the interests of the participants in the research process. Under interests, issues of both rights and welfare are included. Guidelines on good research ethics generally state that researchers shall value the integrity, impartiality and respect for persons and evidence. They also require that researchers have the responsibility both to safeguard the proper interests of those involved in or affected by their work and to report their findings accurately and truthfully (British Psychological society 1996). Issues to consider in research ethics include power, informed consent and confidentiality. In this section I discuss the ethical concerns relating to power relationships and informed consent and show how they affected this study.

5.6.1 Power relationships

Power is most commonly assessed in terms of structural disparities between members of social groups, for example status (employed, educated and middle class) may differentiate the researcher from the respondents. Ethical guidelines are often based on assumptions of unequal power relationships especially where researchers or respondents could abuse their superior power in situations in which either may not be in a position to protect themselves.

Feminist research has highlighted the exploitative nature of traditional social research. They argue that the interview situation can be a potential site for unequal power relations. Hence feminists advocate for a feminist research that is non-hierarchical and non-exploitative, allowing women to speak about, and make sense of their own experiences. This is partly the reason why I opted for the Biographic Narrative Interpretative Interview.

Feminist methods of equalising power relations and establishing rapport can sometimes still be difficult when the people being interviewed are senior

women (Coate 1999). For example, during the interviews there were several interruptions from telephone calls and people walking into the office without knocking. So I kept on switching the tape on and off as the interviews progressed. Some interviewees chose to ignore the telephone during the interviews, and as a result it kept on ringing for several minutes and this was very noisy. Sometimes the interviews were cancelled midway because the interviewees had received an urgent telephone call from the senior manager requiring them to attend to something or a meeting immediately. Some interviewees questioned my interview techniques and this made me feel powerless.

The interviewees, for example, exercised their powers in relation to when the interviews would take place. Some of them failed to honour their appointments. As a result I was also kept waiting for several hours after scheduled time. This was a source of stress for me and I felt disempowered because I would travel long distances through heavy traffic for an 8 o'clock appointment only to be kept waiting and finally the interviewee would not turn up. Because of their seniority in terms of age, status and perhaps unprofessionalism most men interviewees did not see the need to cancel appointments in advance or apologise when I next met them.

5.6.2 Informed consent

The guidelines for informed consent and protection from harm are concerned with ensuring that informants are fully aware of what the purpose of the research is and whom they are talking to. The University College London (UCL) policy on informed consent requires that students who are undertaking research projects using personal data must ensure that: "The research subject is informed of the nature of the research and consents to their personal information being used and that all information is kept securely" (UCL 2001). These guidelines on informed consent required that I tell my interviewees including men that I was interested in the participation of women managers in Kenyan universities. I found this difficult to do. From my previous experience (Onsongo 2002) I anticipated that the men would not be willing to take part in this study if they realised that my focus

was on women managers' experiences. This was especially the case because I was interested on the impact of gender on the experiences of women managers. I took the advice given by Ramazanoglu and Holland (2002,) that:

... if you state that you are interested in researching men in positions of power in order to ascertain ways in which they control women, or that you want to investigate power play between women you are likely to inhibit what participants will discuss (p.157).

Elsewhere Cohen et al (2000) add that sometimes total honesty about one's research question might cause rejection or a distortion in the data, or might influence the results in other ways. Total honesty in my case seemed impossible since I considered that it might affect the degree of cooperation and also mislead respondents into giving me "politically correct answers" (Cohen and Manion, *ibid*). Again I imagined that even for the women specifying from the beginning that I was interested in their experiences as women, would bias the information they would give me. Some would probably concentrate on the negative experiences. On the other hand, trying to hide my real research purpose from the interviewees also gave rise to ethical concerns because not telling them the truth about the nature or topic of the research took away their right not to participate (Robson 2002). In the end when I explained my research topic to my interviewees, I emphasised that I was interested in university managers' experiences because I found it necessary to hear their full story first before narrowing my focus to their experiences as women or men in the subsequent interviews. So the research question was disguised initially to get access to the full story of the respondents and to get men to talk about their experiences.

However, I do not think that inadequate informed consent on the part of the managers I interviewed can cause harm to them. Kelly (1988,) notes that a feminist might not be too troubled by "slipping a radical project past the powerful in order to investigate abuses of power" but would still bear responsibility for negotiating consent that is as fully informed as possible with those to whom harm would result (p.9). To counter inadequately informed consent, I kept the data obtained from the respondents confidential and ensured sufficient anonymisation in reporting the findings. This was

done by not making the interview tapes available to anybody and changing the names of the respondents. The names of their universities and the positions they occupy were omitted from this research report. This is necessary because it will be very difficult for me to control how the information is used and interpreted by others after it has been published.

5.7 Data Analysis Procedures

Huberman and Miles (1998) note that data analysis involves such processes as data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing and verification. These processes occur throughout the research process. Data analysis was a continuous process in this study. I analysed all the data manually. As I conducted the interviews, made observations, held informal conversations and collected documents I did preliminary data analysis in order to be able to plan for the follow up interviews and validate the data obtained with the interviewees. I transcribed the interviews personally soon after each interview. I also typed my observation and field notes as soon as possible.

While transcribing the interviews and writing my field notes I wrote reflective notes and observations as they occurred to me in bold type on the transcript in my word processor. These reflective notes formed my preliminary data analysis and interpretation.

After transcribing all the interviews and writing all the field notes I started the process of organising the data for further analysis and interpretation. I summarised each interviewees' experiences as a manager using the information contained in the interview transcript, background information questionnaire, personal documents and observation notes. These summaries enabled me to produce a case history of each interviewee.

The next stage of the data analysis involved reading and re-reading the case histories of the interviewees in order to identify themes related to their career history in the university, how they got into management, challenges they have faced and how they have overcome them, their perceptions of gender roles and views on participation of women in university

management. By using cut and paste in my word processor I summarised the interviewees' experiences related to each of these themes. For example, under the theme of how they got appointed into management I summarised all the 16 interviewees' narratives. The data was then coded using the themes identified and put into thematic files.

After displaying the data in thematic files I embarked on the process of making sense of the data. I followed the proposal given by Miles and Huberman (1994) that "When you are working with text or less well organised displays, you often note recurring patterns, themes or "gestalts" which pull together many separate pieces of data" (p.246). I read the summaries carefully and noted in the margins concepts, metaphors which the interviewees used to describe their experiences in order to pick the ones that I would use to present the data. I also looked for commonalities and differences in the interviewees experiences.

Interpreting the data

Denzin (1994) argues that "in the social sciences there is only interpretation. Nothing speaks for itself" (p.500). He also notes that there is a problem with the act of interpretation itself because it always transforms the data. This is because in the process of interpretation the "experience and its meaning are filtered through the "researchers' not the subjects' eyes" (p.507). Again when interpreting data there are multiple meanings that one can give to an event, object, experience or account (Reis 2002). The women and men managers' case histories provided me with data on how they perceived their lived experiences. I performed a gender analysis of the interviewees' experiences by paying attention to the obvious and subtle ways in which the cultural beliefs about the roles of women and men in the Kenyan society influenced the nature of their experiences (see section 4.3.4). My analysis of their stories did not aim at representing what they said in respect to their experiences but to go beyond what is taken for granted and try to reveal the gendered nature of their experiences. In the light of a feminist critical policy analysis I linked the meanings and understandings of the interviewees to the organisation culture, political and socio-cultural structures and practices that

affect women's participation in university management. After interpreting the data, I explained the results in the light of feminist critical analysis theories and concepts related to women's participation in higher education management.

Presentation style

Reis (2002) notes that what the researcher selects to present to the reader is a version of their own understanding of the field notes. Therefore, Reis warns that there is a danger of the researcher taking over the voices of the researched. Denzin (1994) comments that "in descriptive realism the writer attempts to stay out of the way and to allow the world being described to speak for itself" (p.507). Following Denzin I avoid representing the managers' accounts in my own words. Instead I present their own description of their experiences by quoting them extensively to allow them to speak for themselves. I also do this to allow the readers to form their own impressions, as a basis for agreeing or arguing with my interpretation. After presenting their own accounts, I then extract and emphasise in my own words what they have said and using a feminist critical analysis, I explore the silences, absences and implications of these women's experiences on their participation in university management in Kenya.

The findings are also presented in such away that demonstrates commonalities between the women, with differences noted where they occur. My decision to present the data in the form of themes instead of case studies of the 16 interviewees can be seen as failure to do justice to their individual experiences (Hall 1996). However, I decided to use themes because I found more commonalities than differences in these interviewees' experiences. So themes are explored using the experiences of any of the eight men and eight women managers because commonalities were sufficiently evident. Where there are differences resulting from, for example, the institutional context (private or public university) I give examples to show how the experiences are different from each other.

5.8 Conclusion

In this chapter I have described the approach and procedures I used to produce data for this study. During the various stages of the data production there were some difficulties encountered such as gaining the trust of the interviewees at the beginning. Some of these difficulties were as a result of the techniques adopted that were not familiar to the study participants. Some of the techniques and procedures adopted enabled me to give a thick description of the women manager's experiences. I have also highlighted some of the ethical issues that the procedures I used raised. I have finished the chapter by explaining how I analyse and present the findings from this study in chapters 6- 9 of this thesis.

Chapter Six: Journey to the top: is it ‘a big surprise’ or a ‘big jump’?

6.1 Introduction

One of the research questions for this study is concerned with how they got into management positions. In this chapter I draw on the data from the fieldwork to describe how these women and men ascended into management positions in their universities. The men and women’s reaction to their appointment is also examined. The expression a ‘big surprise’ was used by some of the women in these interviews to describe their reaction when they first learnt of their appointment into management positions. However, one man described his promotion to a more senior position in the university as a ‘big jump’. These two expressions appear to summarise the journey to the top and the response of the men and women interviewed in this study. This is the reason why I have labelled the chapter, ‘*Journey to the top: is it a big surprise or a big jump?*’

In the examination of how the men and women managers ascended into management I interrogate some of the policies and practices in the two universities governing the appointment of university managers and show how they discriminate against women. I also discuss some of the reasons why the ascension into management was a big surprise for some of the women and a big jump for some men. I finish the chapter by analysing some of the personal and professional attributes that the interviewees thought might have contributed to their appointment. The attributes discussed include hard work, family support, commitment and inspiration from mentors.

6.2 How did the women and men get into management positions?

In this section I draw on the women and managers’ accounts of how they got into management positions. I start with the accounts of the managers in the public university and then move on to describe the experiences of those in the private university.

Ascending into management in the public university

All the women and men interviewed in this study except one woman (Edna) ascended to university management through appointment by the Vice chancellors of their universities. A majority of those in the public university were appointed because they had acquired a higher academic qualification (PhD) and after serving in acting capacity in their departments whereas most of the men were directly appointed without any prior experience in acting positions. Two of the managers in the public university (a man and a woman) were appointed after spearheading change in the university. Some of the manager's descriptions of how they got into management in the public university are summarised here:

I got my position ... during the transition period... I was in the interim committee of the University Academic Staff Union (UASU) and we started fighting for change, only two women were in it...we were eight, six men... Ok after three months of struggle...the former regime in this university changed. Now with the coming of the new vice chancellor of course we were the first people that he knew...there were so many reasons as to why people think that we got the positions...some think we were given these positions...to silence us because we were such a force and to make sure that we are not in the union...But for me I feel a bit differently, first of all we were fighting for change, the corruption that was going on...the way things were done was not fair to most people... the incoming vice chancellor thought that we are the people who seemed to know what was happening... so he wanted a new team of administrators to help him rectify a few of these issues and that is why ... my colleagues and I ...almost all of us were given positions... (Sofia).

After completing my PhD I was promoted to the rank of senior lecturer and they started giving me some management responsibilities. I could be left as the acting chairman (sic) of department or given committees to chair... (Kristine)

I came back in July 1997 after my PhD studies abroad and started going in the line of administration... So I was appointed to my first management position in the department in July 1997. Seven months later that is in March 1998 there was a *big jump* (my emphasis) from a very inexperienced teacher to my current position. Since then I have been in this office having served the longest (Gordon).

Edna in the public university was elected to the management position she was holding. Edna stood for election because people approached her to stand and most of them were available to support her throughout the campaign period. Edna attributed her election to the fact that she was a woman:

...several people came to me and I didn't have any good reason why I wasn't ready for it. But I knew it could be challenging... but I decided I should honour the people's wish and stood ... And another thing is that by virtue of me being a lady, there was a new dimension (Edna).

The election of Edna appears to suggest a change in attitude towards women in leadership positions in this university. Edna was competing with a man in this election. This is because it is very unusual in Kenya for a woman to be elected or appointed when there is a man competing with her. Edna may have been elected as a compromise candidate because the man she was competing with had fallen out with the university administration during the transition period. A senior woman manager in one of the public universities in an earlier study observed that:

Women are sometimes appointed as compromise candidates for a position when powerful male candidates are competing for a position or during a crisis... when office politics embarrassments preclude preferred male appointees (Woman manager quoted in Onsongo 2002, p, 37)

From the narratives of the men and women managers in the public university it would appear that they were appointed to management positions after having attained a higher academic qualification namely a PhD. This shows the importance attached to academic qualification in appointing university managers in public universities in Kenya. For most of the management positions in the public university the appointment policies require that one gets to at least the rank of senior lecturer before they are appointed (see section 3.3.1). Most of these appointments begin at the departmental level before one is given a more senior position within the university.

Ascending into management in the private university

Some women and men were appointed in the private university because the university was beginning a new programme in which they had some

expertise. After coordinating the new programme for some time they were then appointed to be in charge. One woman in the private university (Claire) attributed her appointment to God. Some of the descriptions of how women and men in the private university got into management are summarised here:

I began working in this university in 1998. Prior to that I was a high school teacher for one year. I was employed as a tutorial fellow... At that time the department had only two full time members of staff. The head of department and another lady... I was later promoted to the rank of lecturer... My first administrative responsibility was to coordinate a programme, which the university was introducing for the first time... I was appointed to my current position in 2003 (Eunice).

... I was praying about this because I wanted to come and teach in this university...I struggled and prayed about it...And then I found peace and as a Christian this position is not something I aspired to... I think I was called to this position because I did not ask for it...I am not so interested in advancing my career...I want to serve the Lord in whatever he wants me to be... (Claire).

I started working in a public university in 1989 as a tutorial fellow. I was recruited when a new programme was launched... At the public university I rose up to the position of dean... I was promoted to the rank of lecturer in 1990 and to senior lecturer in 1995 and this is because of my active participation in academic activities like conferences, workshops and seminars. And when I came here I was appointed to a management position as soon as I joined. I was promoted to my current position in 2003 (Arnold).

...I started working at this university in 1997...as a tutorial fellow...at that time I was merely a teacher but I was given some responsibilities in the department... I should think, I could blow my own trumpet, my work was perfect...then it came to the promotion in 1998, which I was not aware of. I did not apply for it. In fact when the promotion came I was on leave...It was such a short period but I believe they saw commitment (Ian).

The narratives of the managers in the private university show that a majority were recruited initially because their expertise was considered necessary for the new programmes the university was launching. Upon recruitment some were appointed coordinators of such programmes and later appointed to be in charge of them. Again the appointment to management of the men and

women in the private university without a PhD may be attributed to the fact that the university was relatively young and small in size and therefore unlikely to attract highly qualified staff. The fact that Christian commitment plays an important role in recruitment and promotion also may have contributed to this (see section 3.3.2.). Eunice in the private university explained:

As you can see we were very few full time members of staff...so being a new member of staff was not a reason for not being given a responsibility...you can also see that the time span 1998 [when she joined] and 2003 [when she was promoted to the current position] is very short time to move at that rate but I would attribute it actually to the fact that the university is young and it has been forced to give responsibility even at an earlier stage and ...it is not really a question of you have publications, a PhD or anything... you find people rising to positions almost even before they are ready to hold them or have received training for them...there are a group of people who are holding positions simply by virtue of the fact that they joined at a particular time, or they are the oldest member of staff and they are doing a relatively good job... (Eunice).

The data on how these men and women ascended into management positions reveal that a majority of the interviewees in the public and the private university had joined the universities as academics at the same academic ranks, that is, graduate assistant or tutorial fellow and then moved up the academic ranks. This suggests that there was no discrimination at the point of recruitment at these two universities. This can be attributed to the fact that the policies that govern recruitment of new academic staff at this point in most universities tend to be fairly clear (Onsongo 2000 and Onsongo 2002). However, an analysis of the rate at which the men and women are promoted through the academic ranks, especially in the public university, reveals that although some of the men and women had joined the universities at the same rank and had worked for a similar number of years, men were promoted faster and appointed to management positions earlier than the women (see Table 5). For example, in the public university, two of the women had taken 10 and 11 years respectively before being promoted to the rank of senior lecturer. The other two women had taken 6 and 7 years respectively before

promotion to this rank. On the other hand one man had taken three years, another four years and the other two 5 years.

Requirements for appointment and promotion into management

A gender analysis of the stories of how the men and women rose to management reveals some implicit gender discrimination against women. In the public university, for example, there is a requirement that one rises to the rank of senior lecturer before being appointed to management. This requirement is likely to disadvantage women who, for various reasons take longer to get a doctoral degree which is mandatory before one is promoted to the rank of senior lecturer. The experiences of most of the women interviewed in this study showed that they had taken longer to do their PhD than the men. For example, all the men in the public university had taken 3-4 years to study for their PhDs. Two of the men had studied locally while the other two had obtained their degrees abroad. The women had taken longer, Kristine and Edna 7 years, Sofia 9 years and Natasha from the private university 8 years. Only one woman in the public university (Beatrice) who studied abroad took 3 years to complete her PhD.

There are various reasons why women take longer to complete their PhDs. They include inadequate funding, family obligations and sometimes sexual harassment (see Sofia's experience) from their supervisors. Kristine explains the difficulties facing women who want to pursue further studies in this context:

And at that juncture now I had already registered for my PhD... and the requirement to move to the next grade was that you must be a PhD holder. And of course doing a PhD is very challenging especially for women who have multiple roles to play... You become a student; you continue to be a staff member in your department. You are a mother, a wife and all the other social commitments in life. So it actually took a bit of time, seven years to complete my PhD and for that whole period I was actually stagnating in the same rank... when I completed my PhD I was promoted to the rank of senior lecturer. And now as a senior lecturer they started giving me administrative duties (Kristine).

The experiences of the Edna, Natasha and Sofia also point to the difficulties of women getting their PhDs in the Kenyan context:

The PhD took so long. I registered in 1996. I went through the course work and in 1999 when I ought to have gone through the programme... is when I started my fieldwork. My fieldwork took 18 months... I finished my fieldwork in August 2000... even that time it was such a struggle because I was not getting money on time... I almost gave up ...I had no source of money at all, for my own subsistence and for even the family... So what I did, I took on a part time job in the university... but this meant that I would not attend to my PhD work... So when I came here and now I had some source of income, I went on with my writing up... And that is now when I was able to submit. And then after that, one of my supervisors had a problem with the university after I had submitted probably he wanted to use me as a weapon. He went away with my thesis. Now when I checked again it was not there. So I decided rather than follow I just came back and redid it and submitted it. And even after a second submission in February 2003, it is only in March 2004 that I am being called for defence (Natasha).

I joined the university as a tutorial fellow in 1989. I worked for two years and by 1992 I was promoted to the rank of lecturer. It was unfortunate because I stagnated in that position until 2002, actually for 10 years... various reasons... I was also working on my PhD which I cleared in 1999... When I was working on my PhD initially, half way down the line I was being supervised by some two men, one of whom thought that he could take sexual advantage of me. He started dating me and when I declined his dates and then he became very very hostile to my work. He started frustrating me and perhaps that is one of the reasons it took too long. Too long not only to get the certificate but also for promotion because he is very senior within the university... He became very very hostile ... any time I could go to his office for supervision, he could close his door and start telling me anything, frustrating me, abusing me... So he is thinking that you are there for him... It became very very serious and we almost reached physical battles because he would almost force me physically... And this is a person you cannot report. Whom are you reporting him to? He is the university himself (Sofia).

Edna's experience is slightly different in that it was a woman in her department who had conspired with her supervisor who was also the chair of department to frustrate her:

My PhD work stalled because this woman did not want me to complete it before her. She was a friend to my supervisor and the two conspired to frustrate all my efforts in the department. My supervisor could stay

with my work from October to June of the next year without giving me any feedback. These two people made my life very difficult in the department. Anything I wanted to do was blocked. For example one time I won a grant to go abroad for a short course. The chairman (sic) refused me permission without any explanation. I was assigned heavier teaching loads while others did not have work to do. I felt so frustrated until at some time thought of resigning because things were not moving. Finally my supervisor fell ill and died before I completed my PhD (Edna).

The experiences narrated here are indicative of how men in powerful positions serve as gatekeepers of who gets the qualification required for upward mobility. Thornton (1996) and Bagihole and White (2003) argue that because of the male cultural hegemony in universities only a few women get promoted to senior positions but often these few women pay a price. Many women must first pay homage to what Thornton (1996) calls the benchmark men in universities if they wish to be promoted to leadership roles. These women's experiences also show some aspect of the traditional attitude towards women as sex objects or wives as illustrated by Sofia's experience.

The men in these interviews, especially those in the public university, had taken a relatively shorter time to get their PhDs than the women. Some of the possible reasons for their quick completion include the fact that they were able to secure funding to study abroad. This is something some of the women in this study were unable to do either because of discrimination by the scholarship awarding bodies, their family responsibilities or cultural expectations of them as women. Kristine from the public university found that some of the scholarship awarding bodies discriminated against women because of their perceived gender roles as mothers:

And the unfortunate part about it [PhD requirement] is that although you are expected to acquire it before you can move up the academic ladder, there is no financial support. You are expected to look for your own sponsorship... and many times women are disadvantaged especially in terms of the kind of scholarships you can take. It becomes a challenge especially if you have young children to make a decision that I am now going to *leave my children and go for further studies abroad* (my emphasis). I was actually lucky and interviewed twice for scholarships... And actually some of the questions they were asking me were gender biased. Because they were asking me how young my child

was and when I told them he was two years they were not amused. They were wondering how I was going to leave a two year old child to go and pursue further studies. And I told them that was a domestic issue which I could take care of but they did not believe me. So I was not given the scholarship (Kristine).

Beatrice from the same university explained how cultural expectations on the age of marriage for women made her debate whether she should go for further studies or not:

When I got the scholarship to go abroad for my PhD I was thinking about it and wondering should I go or should I not go. I wasn't married by then. So, I thought should I get married first... this is because we are in a society that expects one to have been married much earlier... when it comes to doing things like studies maybe those are the things in a lady's mind. One wonders if I continue with studies will I ever get a husband and things like that (Beatrice).

For some of the women their family responsibilities limited their choice of where they would pursue their doctoral studies:

When I joined the department there were opportunities to go and study outside the country... I had a young family and I opted to study here and be with them... I had that obligation... it was a choice I had to make but I don't think I would have looked at it in any other way (Edna).

The men who pursued their PhD studies in Kenya were able to complete faster than the women probably because they are exempted from the domestic responsibilities that take most of the women's time. Kristine observed that:

You know men can afford to concentrate on their PhDs... because they go home and say; 'I am working on my PhD so I do not want any disturbance'... but for a woman... you still have to do your domestic chores... it becomes a big challenge (Kristine).

The duration taken to complete a PhD had implications for these women's and men's promotion through the academic ranks and subsequently their appointment into management positions especially in the public university. The fact that these men completed their PhDs earlier than the women implied that they rose up the academic ranks faster than the women and therefore increased their chances of being appointed to senior management positions. On the other hand because the women in these interviews took

longer to complete their PhDs, some stagnated at the same academic rank and therefore took longer to be appointed to management position.

The narratives on how men and women access management in the public university also revealed that whereas some men like Arnold and Gordon were promoted to the next academic rank (lecturer or senior lecturer) and appointed to management positions before attaining the senior lecturer rank, the women stagnated in one academic rank until they acquired the PhD and earned promotion to the rank of senior lecturer as stated in the promotion criteria. Arnold and Gordon shared their experience:

I was promoted to the rank of lecturer while I was still pursuing my PhD abroad... during that time some of my colleagues that I had left behind, who had not yet received any training had been moved or promoted to the rank of lecturer... that is a permanent position... so on that basis I requested that I be promoted... (Gordon).

I started working in a public university in 1989 as a tutorial fellow. I was promoted to the rank of lecturer in 1990 and to senior lecturer in 1995 and this is because of my active participation in academic activities (Arnold).

It is significant to note that Arnold who later moved to the private university had risen to rank of senior lecturer and even dean without a PhD in the public university. Again Arnold's research and publication profile is not better than some of the women's (see Table 6). Gordon from the public university admitted that the way he had been promoted through the management and academic ranks was fairly quickly and against the stated criteria:

Like my own history, the way I have grown in this career I would say it was not of *normal progress* (my emphasis). Because if you just take seven months in chairmanship (sic). I am talking about administrative career now... chairmanship and jumping from there to my current position. One would have hoped that probably as a chairman which has a two year term and then you could also renew, and then become a dean and then from there one would hope that they will have enough experience and come up to being what I am. But this is like something I was being *pulled from somewhere and being put in a place* [my emphasis]. I did not have much experience (Gordon).

The experiences of Gordon and Arnold suggest that there might be other factors other than academic qualification that influence appointments into management positions and promotion through the academic ranks in the

public university.

Others factors influencing appointment and promotion of university managers

At the time of this study none of the university management positions was publicly advertised or subjected to competitive interviewing. As a result the criteria used to appoint university managers were subject to speculation and suspicion. Some of the men and women interviewed in this study were of the opinion that tribalism and political patronage influenced some of these appointments. Some of the views expressed by some interviewees with regard to tribalism include:

...I have a feeling that tribes, or tribal sentiments or inclinations have really had an impact in the management of public universities...in the way people are hired, appointed and even promoted ... tribal inclinations tend to hinder progress... it kind of creates some elements of suspicion and some element of doubt... either because of the limited positions or resources one tends to feel like we want our person... perhaps it is also a kind of hanger over from the previous regime [government] (Geoffrey).

... in the larger Kenyan society tribalism is very rampant and universities would not escape that... look at... for example... the chairmen (sic) of departments, the directors... all those appointed people you can almost know that this one is from this tribe... you know if the vice-chancellor comes from a certain tribe, all the people appointed in a particular office come from that tribe (Kristine).

I was surprised that tribalism influenced the appointment and recruitment of people in the private university as well. Connex from the private university shared her experience:

I was employed as a part time lecturer for quite a long time. I think they kept me on because they thought I was doing a good job... I was not interviewed for a full time position until a certain woman belonging to the tribe of the vice chancellor came around... she was supposed to be employed full time and one manager (a woman) came and said ' we cannot interview this one alone when the other person (Connex) has been here longer'. Otherwise I was going to be part time forever... So there is discrimination on the basis of tribes (Connex).

The appointment based on tribalism or political patronage was sometimes not

taken positively by other academics and it often led to animosity from the other members of staff who become uncooperative with the intention of wanting to fail the appointed person. Ronald in the public university explained:

Because it [position] is an appointment... not an election... from the word go people think that you are connected with the big man ... therefore you were favoured. It is just an issue of frustrating you... the big man knows you, he has appointed you and you are working for the big man... (Ronald).

The use of the expression 'big man' by Ronald here implies that the appointing person is always a man in this context. In the recent past (June 2003) there have been campaigns by academics in public universities to have the posts of vice chancellors and other senior university managers advertised in the media. In July 2003, for example the Universities Academic Staff Union (UASU) made an appeal to the government to advertise the post of the vice- chancellors of each public university in the media. The union argued that the appointment of vice chancellors based on political loyalty/ patronage adversely affects the administration and academic programs in the universities (East African Standard Newspapers July 28, 2004).

In October 2004 a report was released on the intended advertisement of the post of vice chancellor at the University of Nairobi. This report attracted mixed reactions from the academic staff. Some welcomed the move but cautioned that the relevant university statutes should be looked at carefully because there was a danger of violating them. The UASU local chapter chairperson demanded that the union be involved in the process of identifying the new vice chancellor (East African Standard Newspaper 5th October 2004). The reaction of some members of parliament to the possible advertisement of senior management positions in public universities was even more astonishing. One Member of Parliament commenting on the issue in parliament felt that one of the chancellors advocating for the advertisement of these positions was doing so because he did not understand how universities are managed:

This is an individual who spent all his life selling Kimbo [local

cooking fat] and lifebuoy [bathing soap] who was recently made a chancellor. Now he has advertised the post of vice chancellor and other senior management jobs in the university... It has never happened before. The statutes only allow for presidential appointments (East African Standard Newspapers, 14th October 2004)

The views of the managers interviewed in this study on the appointment of university vice chancellors in the public university on a competitive basis were mixed. Some felt that given the ethnic and regional diversity of the Kenyan society, there was need for tribal and regional balancing in the appointments:

I think in the public universities there is a balance which is maintained by the presidential appointments at national level because we are a country of tribes we can't really ignore this fact... the appointments give people some kind of confidence and they feel that they own some of these universities ...if we make application for these positions ... we cannot rule out but there could be certain situations where we have perhaps one ethnic or one region having very qualified people who may occupy all the positions ... the other aspect I think ...if we have to really go as per the qualifications we may even end up getting people from outside the country. And when we get them from outside the country sometimes there are certain issues, internal issues that they may not be very clear about which may make the governance even if they are really qualified a little bit problematic. So really I have a feeling that I would still go for the appointment so long as we have confidence in the person who is appointing (Geoffrey).

Some managers thought that the appointment of senior managers through open competition would enable universities to attract people who are qualified and genuinely interested in management. Edna from the public university said:

...the move right now is towards having people to apply for these positions. So if you have been following the media lately. This university has advertised some of the senior management positions, which was not the case before. And then the assistant minister has commented last week that the vice-chancellors are going to be applying for their jobs as well as the deputy vice chancellors. So it means it will be a person who is interested and has got the skills and the training in that area which would be different from now when people are just appointed either because... I don't know some of the reasons for these appointments have been political... (Edna).

The fact that there is no open criterion followed in the appointment and promotion of most senior university managers in these universities poses a

major obstacle to women's participation in university management. Again since the policies outlined in the statutes make no explicit requirement for gender balance in appointments it leaves a lot of room for abuse by those with negative attitudes towards women in leadership positions.

Being better than men

The data on how women got appointed into management positions in the public university appear to suggest that academic qualifications (PhD) are essential for academic women's upward mobility. Research done elsewhere on the participation of women in the management of educational institutions appear to corroborate this data. Gupton and Slick (1996) in their survey of 300 female administrators in public school education (Superintendents, assistant superintendents and high school principals) in the United States found that having the necessary degrees and credentials that qualify one for a position of leadership was a *must* for women. However, in Gupton and Slick's study, most women interviewed and surveyed indicated that for other women credentials were not enough. One respondent in their survey said "You will need the necessary tickets but the tickets do not guarantee you a position" (p.2).

Therefore, Gupton and Slick (ibid) concluded that the credentials are necessary for women to get in the door of educational administration but once in, there is no guarantee that those credentials would provide one with actual access to a management position. Credentials are only a part of the preparation women need. According to Gupton and Slick (ibid) women also need to be much prepared than the male competitors. They need to know those in power and those most influential in making promotion, and ensure that those people know them and their accomplishments. Hence the advice given by a respondent in Gupton and Slick (1996, p 9) that: "You will have to be better than your male counterparts. Working hard and having the credentials will get you just as far as a woman can go" is reflected in the experiences of some of the women in this study. For women to compete with

men, Natasha from the private university thought that they needed to be '*very very strong*' (my emphasis). To be very strong according to Natasha entails:

If you are in the academic field, you have to have the qualification, you have to have the certificates ... to compete with others...when you are managing others especially men, they would want to undermine you so you have to get above that. And the way of getting above that is to make sure you know what is expected of you and you work hard to achieve it...I believe women are given responsibilities when they really shine out or when there is no other man to compete with or when it is really conspicuous that you are way above but if you are at par or at the same level I believe men will be given the opportunity. For example there is a young man who had a diploma in education, he later went and did his bachelors degree. He is now doing his masters degree here. He was appointed a deputy principle of a college after his bachelors degree and after working in the college for a very short time. Yet there were these ladies who even had masters degrees and had worked at the college longer and yet they were not appointed (Natasha).

Natasha also felt that if she were not ahead of the men she was appointed to manage, she would not have been given the opportunity:

...and if I were not one step ahead I believe nobody would have given me this position. So, it is like for a woman you must, somebody must be thorough sure that you are really qualified before you are given anything. So it is like you are given it grudging so you have to go beyond that grudge (Natasha).

It appears that the perception that women have to be better than men in order to be appointed or promoted may have influenced the women in these interviews especially those in the public university but even some in the private university to do more research, participate in local and international conferences and publish than the men. Analysis of some of the women's curriculum vitae revealed that they were indeed ahead of the men. They had been involved in more research projects, attended and presented papers at local, regional and international conferences than the men interviewed. These women had also published slightly more books, articles in academic journals. Their research and publication profile is summarised in Table 6.

Table 6: Research and Publications Profile of the Respondents

Name	Books	Book chapter	Journal Articles	Conference papers			Research Grants
				L*	R*	I*	
Beatrice	0	0	12	13	7	5	3
Edna	10	13	10	71	17	7	5
Kristine	9	0	1	30	4	0	29
Natasha	0	1	2	4	3	0	0
Albert	1	0	1	5	0	3	0
Arnold	1	0	1	10	0	0	0
Gordon	0	0	7	2	0	5	0
Geoffrey	0	0	4	12	0	4	0
Derrick	6	6	10	7	0	2	9

Source: Respondents Curriculum Vitae

L*: stands for local, R*: Regional and I*: International seminars and conferences.

The statistics in Table 6 show that some of the women (Edna, Beatrice, and Kristine) had published slightly more and presented more conference papers compared to the men. If research and publications were the main criteria for academic promotions in these universities as some of the women thought, it might be expected that these women would be occupying more senior academic and probably management positions than the ones they were holding. Kristine explained the importance attached to research and publications in the public university:

...you realise that the administrative skills are just one aspect. It is actually almost negligible when they are considering your promotion... for example if you want to be promoted from senior lecturer to associate professor they would want to see what publications you have. They don't care what administrative skills you have. They want to see how many conferences you have attended and how many researches you have done (Kristine).

The fact that some of the women in these interviews were ahead of the men in their research and publications might have contributed greatly to their being recognised and therefore being appointed into management positions. Research done elsewhere has tended to show that for women to be appointed they need to be better than men. Chanana (2003) in a case study based on the

observation of career paths of men and women staff in one department an Indian university found that:

...all women faculty had doctorates, a considerable amount of teaching and research experience, publications and no interruptions in career for child bearing and childrearing. Although all the men had doctorates, not all of them had the teaching and research experience or publications at the time of appointment (Chanana 2003, p. 385).

This finding made Chanana (2003) conclude that gendered career paths in universities while formally structured by promotion practices, owe much to informal networks and particular forms of visibility linked to power. Chanana (ibid) identified two forms of visibility in academic settings. The first is *formal visibility* that comes through research, publications, efficient and effective leadership or administration and research guidance and supervision of students. According to Chanana (ibid) formal visibility is not the criterion for promotion in universities especially when it comes to promoting and appointing women to senior positions.

The second form and the most important is *informal visibility*. This visibility is established through informal networks and social interactions. Chanana observes that informal visibility is easy for men who can, for example, visit the vice chancellor at his residence in the evening and also go to all seminars and conferences that the vice chancellor and other powerful men inaugurate in the university. Attendance at such functions Chanana argues ensures that the vice chancellor sees them and often invites them to his house or for a drink. This process of networking usually takes place during and after office hours. Women may find it hard to take part in informal social interaction because of domestic responsibilities and also the fact that such interaction may be perceived by others to mean sexual relationships with the men they are interacting with. The informal visibility, Chanana (ibid) observes leads to formal recognition and appointments to important positions. It leads to files relating to applications for promotion and appointments moving faster and decisions taken in favour of those who are visible.

Chanana also observes that in the constitution of committees, informal visibility is converted into formal visibility and power, which have a bearing on promotions and appointments. Some of the faculty members who are part of the informal network are appointed and nominated to important committees. The combination of visibility and the power to nominate ensure that very few women are represented in these committees. Hence, Chanana argues that visibility through networking and lobbying is crucial in the meritocratic form of institutions universities are.

A study done by Kanake (1997) in Kenyan public universities aimed at establishing the factors that influence promotions and appointment of academic and administrative found that informal visibility, campus politics, tribalism and nepotism were the main factors influencing these appointments. A male academic in Kanake's study said:

The university is based on social groups (clubs) and members try to join the clubs of important people like the vice chancellors, the deans, heads of department in order to create good relationships with them in the hope that when it comes to promotions or appointments they will get recommended. Staff who do not belong to these clubs... may not get promotion or appointment even if they are qualified (male academic quoted in Kanake 1997, p.63).

The data in this study suggest that the women interviewed were striving to achieve formal visibility. This could be the possible reason why they were working extra hard to get published and do more research than the men (see section 9.2.1). During the fieldwork I observed that the women were out in the field doing research or attending and giving conference papers more than the men. It possible that these women had resorted to achieving formal visibility because the informal visibility may lead to their social interactions especially with senior men managers being misinterpreted. In an earlier study some women managers in Kenyan universities narrated how the social codes governing the relationships between men and women in the Kenyan society affected their performance as managers. One woman manager in a Christian sponsored university said that her male boss could not call her to his office alone especially after 5.00 pm. This is because he did not want to be seen alone with a woman in his office as people might think he was having a love

affair. The woman manager found this argument offensive and limiting her job performance (Onsongo 2002).

Some of the women and men interviewed in this study alluded to the fact that there were common allegations within the public university that women were appointed to senior management positions because they had sexual relationships with the men appointing them. Edna in the public university thought these allegations were unfair to women but accepted that they were very common and were discouraging women from participating in university management:

I think it is unfair because that is not what really does the job, that could happen but it is not the issue... could we say that all these men who have gotten where they are, have done so because they have done that kind of thing? But the women are more scrutinized. And also because of our culture, it is like...women can't be managers and if they are appointed then it must have something to do with their morality or having affairs with the vice chancellor ... These allegations are discouraging women from taking up these [management] positions. (Edna).

Edna also said that she was not able to relate to her male colleagues (managers) as freely as she could with the women because 'you do not want to be misunderstood'. These allegations could be the reason why some of the women in these interviews were keen to emphasise that they had been promoted purely on merit. For example Kristine said:

I was employed at the bottom level that is a tutorial fellow. I had just finished my masters' degree and I was assigned the duties that are assigned everybody else. And off course when you are new you do not expect to be given any administrative position. So I worked for one and half years and then was promoted to the rank of lecturer. Probably because I had fulfilled some of the requirements... So I had started thinking about the area I wanted to do for my PhD ...writing papers for conferences...attending seminars and workshop... that ...prepared the ground for me to move up the academic ladder. So I was promoted purely on merit because I had fulfilled the requirements they were looking for (Kristine).

The exclusion of women from the informal networks of the university has been found to be a great impediment to women's career advancement in academia. Toren (2003) in her study of women's participation in higher education as academics and managers in Israel advances the proposition that

a central impediment to women's career advancement in academia is the discrepancy between their "human and social capital" (p.5). She argues that although some women have some "human capital (education, experience, skills, ability, training, knowledge, motivation) just like the men, they lack the social capital (social ties, information, mentoring, sponsorship, support, networks)". Toren (ibid) observes that the social networks are the ones that tie the knots that bring about the professional capital (research grants, appointments and promotion, equipment and space, publication, research). This situation Toren argues accounts in part for women dropping out in the course of their academic careers, their minority status, slower promotion, crowding in the lower academic ranks of the academic hierarchy and under-representation in decision-making bodies. The informal networks are maintained and kept firmly in place because people tend to prefer people like them as partners and workers. Informal networks are used in asking somebody you know to recommend somebody they know for the job (Essed 2003).

Some of the women in this study in addition to achieving visibility through research and publication also made themselves visible by taking on extra responsibilities in the department before they were formally appointed to management positions. Edna, Kristine and Beatrice recognise the fact that it is through doing some extra work in the department that they became visible. They were sometimes acting as chairs of the department, chairing committees and sometimes representing the chair of department in some functions:

A few years after I joined the university I would say I got into some administrative responsibilities being a registration officer in the department, dealing with issues of examinations and things like that. And once in a while acting as chairman of department. I got into actual administration in 1996 when I was appointed to a management position in the department. I acted for one year after which I was confirmed and did my four years... I have gone on to serve in other capacities in the university up to the office where I am now (Edna).

And now as a senior lecturer they started giving me administrative duties. I could be left as the acting chairman of the department or given committees within the department to chair... and these committees now give you the administrative skills, which, are a requirement

anyway when they want to promote you to a managerial position or senior positions they look at your administration record... I became a chair of board of governors for some schools and I became a chair of a Non-Governmental Organisation... So based on these skills now and with my PhD I was actually appointed in acting capacity two years ago to the position I am holding now (Kristine).

The women in the private university were also given some new programmes to coordinate before being appointed. So these women were in what Powney (1997) calls the appropriate springboard for promotion or appointment because some had been on an acting capacity, attained a higher qualification, chaired departmental committees, coordinated programmes and been vocal in fighting for change in the institution.

On the other hand, the men even though they had achieved a higher academic qualification, especially in the public university, did not seem to have worked extra hard to achieve formal visibility in terms of research and publications that led to their appointment. It would thus appear that they might have achieved their management positions through informal visibility. For example, Geoffrey started his teaching job at the university initially as a part-time lecturer. He was called by the head of department to assist him to teach his courses because he was 'a very busy man'. It is the head of department who organised for a 'quick interview' when a vacancy arose in the department. Geoffrey shared his experience:

And he told me very quickly to appear in an interview, which he had organised with the administration of this university... so I was able to attend quickly and I think they were satisfied with my papers and my input.... So they told me to report immediately and continue teaching as a lecturer (Geoffrey).

From the stories and experiences of these women it can be argued that they seem to have taken what is considered the *normal* route to senior university management than the men. Whereas some of the women had held various management responsibilities in an acting capacity in the departments before being appointed or being confirmed as managers, the men here seemed to have gotten into management without having had specific administrative responsibilities in the departments, for example, as acting chair of

department. Some of the women in the public university (Edna and Beatrice) had served their terms (four years) in their departments before being promoted to senior management positions within the public university as stipulated in the policies governing appointment (see section 3.3.1).

6.3 Men and Women managers' response to their appointment

Initially there was some hesitation or surprise on the part of some women and some men especially in the public university when they were appointed into management positions. Some of the women and men attributed their hesitation or surprise to inadequate experience, training and orientation in management:

I would say that initially I was a little nervous in taking up my first appointment...I wondered whether to accept it and I had to talk one or two people who encouraged me. And one of the reasons was, ok the chairman before me had given me some opportunities to act when he was on leave... so I had that experience, however I wasn't too sure that I could take up the *whole thing* [my emphasis] and maybe this is because when one is appointed there is no orientation... you get into an office and you are expected to carry on, like find your way around... (Beatrice).

I should say it was a *big surprise* [my emphasis] when I got my first appointment... I thought it was also a challenge to get this position... I wouldn't say for any reason really but you know you are not quite prepared for it. You are employed to teach and then administration responsibilities come along... (Edna).

The main reason for these women's hesitation or surprise appears to be the fact that they had not been given the training or orientation for the management positions they had been appointed to. Another possible reason for the surprise or hesitation on the part of these women was probably their early socialisation which may have contributed to their perception that leadership positions are only suitable for men. Kristine from the public university explained:

You know many of us have come from backgrounds that do not prepare us for leadership positions...girls and boys are socialised differently. Whereas boys grow up being told that they are supposed to stand up and be leaders, girls are socialised to be followers. So when girls grow up and reach a point where they are supposed to become

leaders, there is a personality clash between what they have been socialised into and what is expected of them as managers... (Kristine).

Beatrice from the same university admitted that part of her hesitation was due to the fact that she was the first woman to be appointed to her position since the university was chartered:

I was actually the first woman in the faculty to be appointed to the management position... there had never been a woman manager since the university became chartered... that is why I told you that at first I wondered whether to take the position or not (Beatrice).

The social construction of gender and the assignment of specific roles and responsibilities and expectations for women and men in the wider society may have therefore played a role in these women's initial response to their appointments. This could be the reason why Beatrice and partly Edna expressed doubt that, although they had been in an acting capacity in a similar position before their appointment, they were not sure that they would take 'the whole thing' implying that they would rather support (nurture) the men in these positions by stepping in when they are away but not take the management positions themselves.

A critical feminist analysis of the data on the women's response further revealed that another possible reason why the women might have hesitated or gotten surprised is because they were concerned that given the limited training in management they were likely to make mistakes and this would spoil the chances for other women. Kristine in the public university thought that because the parameters for judging men and women managers' performance are different, women are expected to do exemplary well to be appointed or recognised in the university:

As a woman manager, your success must be evident for everybody to see. Otherwise if they can't see an active department, if they can't see a growing department then of course they keep saying it is because she is a woman... For example, if you are given a task, an assignment you and a gentleman whereas they may be willing to accept and admit that the task was not satisfactorily done, they will judge the woman more harshly than the man... they will say that because of being a woman you did not deliver because as far as the ideological position of the society is concerned that kind of administrative skill is attributed to men... In terms of outputs, the outputs expected of a woman may be higher than the man's. Whereas you may have drawbacks, the

drawbacks are magnified...whereas for the man they may be willing to give concessions, that may be he was facing this and that problem but for a woman they will not want to know the circumstances under which your output was below the expectation...you must put measures in place to ensure that whatever you are doing you leave no room for criticisms... Let people have no opportunity to say you have failed. So you go out of your way. You go an extra mile to make sure whatever you are doing is a success (Kristine).

These different expectations of men and women in management positions may have led some women in this context to be really careful about what positions they go for. Some of them were not just after upward mobility like some of the men (see Gordon and Geoffrey response below). The women here seemed to be keen on serving the people rather than getting the status and power. For example, Edna said that she had declined to vie for the position she was occupying two years earlier because she had just been appointed to a new office:

In the year 2001, in this same office there was an election. Some people approached me to stand but I said no. The reason being that I had just been appointed to another office where I had served for only two months... I thought it was not in good taste to start looking for another office... (Edna).

Again, even when Edna was vying for her position she confessed that one question kept on coming from the electorate 'What are you going to do for us?' Her response to the question was 'we are going to do everything together. You will tell me your needs and we agree on how we can go about meeting them'. It appears that the women's desire to give quality service may have made them think that they needed adequate training, orientation and experience before taking up management positions.

The reasons for hesitation on part of the men seem to be different from those of women and reflect a gender dimension. Gordon's hesitation was a result of his concern for his academic career in terms of enhancing his research profile in his subject area, which, in his opinion would contribute to his upward mobility to the highest academic rank (professor):

... the dilemma which this appointment put in me was that I had just graduated with my PhD, and I was trying to get my roots in the subject area. I am consolidating networks in order to improve my research

capacity in the subject and help colleagues also in the department to grow... Because one thing, which I forgot to mention, is that since I completed my PhD I have been able to send over five people to train for their PhD programmes and some of them have come back. So when you are in administration and you are seeing them grow in their career, so tomorrow they will be professors while you don't have the opportunity to publish as much as them because of the nature of the work here... (Gordon).

On his part Geoffrey was concerned about his research profile, which will increase his financial gains. He was also concerned about his personal reputation in the sense that he did not want to manage what he considered to be a very difficult department:

... it took me about three days to decide whether to accept the appointment. And one kind of reason was I really felt like I didn't want to be tied down because I saw as if I may not have so much time to do my research and I felt like this will interfere with my freedom, my operations... one of the other factors was like, well I could see that I would encounter difficulties as a manager because of high level criticisms from colleagues. I mean from the experiences of the previous manager I could hear these kind of criticisms from members who could say so and so is really weak in this aspect or he is not really doing this or why had he not done this and that. So there were all these kinds of criticisms and I thought those are not the kind of criticism I wanted. And when I looked at the kind of meetings which they used to have and some are called at very short notice I thought I would not cope. Again this was around the time I felt that now I have finished my PhD and should improve my research profile and at least penetrate the world of money.... (Geoffrey).

It appears that these two men were more concerned with the fact that they were being alienated from the academic community with its attendant rewards of possibly gaining a reputation in the subject area. These men managers' response to their appointments is similar to academic managers interviewed by Henkel (2000) in the UK. Henkel (ibid) in her interviews with academics and members of senior academic management teams in four universities in the UK found that most managers perceived becoming a manager as acquiring not only a new role but also an alien identity that might set them apart from their colleagues. For a minority of the respondents in Henkel's study who considered themselves as researchers, becoming heads of department was evidently unwelcome and if temporary, it was seen as an

interruption to the 'narrative' of their career. A male professor of Physics in Henkel's study said:

I hate to think of myself as someone who spends most of his time in the office and on committees ...I try to keep up with research, but the real action is with my colleagues (Henkel 2000, p.242).

The men's concern about their research profile also suggests the competitiveness in research output in universities that is characteristic of the male cultural hegemony described by Bagihole and White (2003). This competitiveness based on research output is sometimes encouraged by governments and donors (in low income countries) to the detriment of quality and service to the society. Bagihole and White (ibid) give the example of the White Paper on Higher education in the UK (2003), which openly encourages competition between academics by concentrating research money in only a few elite universities. Bagihole and White (ibid) argue that this disproportionately impacts on women academics that are more likely to be found in the new post 1992 universities, which are less likely to receive this research money .

Elsewhere, Park (1996) argues that the quantity over quality approach to assessing research productivity in universities encourages "conservative research that can be completed within a short time" and may lead academics to compromise their personal and intellectual values (p.48). Women are disadvantaged in the process since the activities and the research areas they work in are rarely considered in promotions. Academics in Kenya are also faced with the pressure to do more research and publish and often women are encouraged to be aggressive in these areas in order to compete with men. One male professor in Kanake (1997) said:

... women should pursue higher education (PhD), conduct research and publish in order to compete honourably with men. This will see more of them in senior professional ranks and in administration (p.37).

The use of the term fight by this professor shows how tough the struggle can be for women. So the analysis of the managers' response to their appointment reveals some differences among men and women. The women in these interviews appear to hesitate or are surprised because they have been

socialised to believe that management positions are suitable for men. They also feel that they do not possess the necessarily skills to be able to give service to the people they have been appointed to manage. The men on the other hand hesitate to take up the management positions because they are concerned about their research profile and the academic rewards that come with it. In the next section I examine some of the factors that the managers thought contributed to their being appointed.

6.4 Personal and professional attributes/factors contributing to career success and rise into management.

Research that has been done in other countries shows that women attribute their career success to personal motivation, hard work and determination among other factors. Hassan (2003) in her study of women who had achieved senior positions in the society in Pakistan concluded that women who succeeded in their careers had determination, vision, hard work, supportive partners and a supportive work environment. Deem and Ozga (1997) in an exploratory research analysing the values, experiences and practices of 18 women academics who occupied management positions in various universities in the U.K found that the consensus around their strengths included having a clear vision or a set of priorities about what needed to be done; stamina, persistence and commitment; collaborative and consultative styles; lack of concern for personal status and being able to do many things at once.

The women and men managers interviewed in this study attributed their career success to various personal and professional attributes in addition to their academic qualifications. Some of the attributes identified include hard work, commitment, having a vision, being responsible, family support, Christian values and inspiration from mentors. I will now discuss some of the factors that were most common among men and women.

Hard work

Both men and women mentioned that hard work was a factor that had greatly contributed to their career success:

Of course you have to work hard... I don't think you can get anything without working hard, being determined and having a vision about what you want to do, where you want to go. I think those are important in moving ahead (Beatrice).

...in terms of success I have a conviction that hard work is rewarding and that is why I could manage to rise from the rank of lecturer to the position I hold now (Derrick).

Some of the men felt that commitment to their work had earned them promotions:

...commitment to your work... when you are talking about commitment.. you see when you have a lot of work in the office I believe and you are not committed you will not finish ... So my commitment ... was also manifesting itself in the time/number of hours I put into my office work...So I could come very very early in the morning (emphasises by tone of voice) and work over lunch hour and leave after 6.00 pm. So that could be one of the factors that would have contributed to my appointment into this office (Ian).

The description by Ian suggests that commitment as defined in this context implies putting in more office hours into one's job. Some of the men and women interviewed said that they were working long hours in order to cope with the high work load (see section 9.2.1). The sexual division of housework or domestic responsibilities along gender lines in the Kenyan society may make it difficult for women in this context to achieve this kind of commitment without making sacrifices (see section 7.4). In this regard commitment and hard work defined as working long hours favours men more than women and this has implications for women's participation in university management.

Family support

At the personal level most of the women managers attributed their academic career success and rise to management to the support from their parents and spouses. Some of the women shared their experiences:

My husband is very supportive and he encourages me and so that is instrumental. My parents were also very supportive, you know as I was doing my PhD ... they always seemed to have a very strong word of encouragement because they always believed in striving for the best. (Beatrice).

I have had a lot of support from the family. My husband, even children and the entire extended family. My late father, wishing that he was still alive, not so much for anything but he always said do your best, work hard...his words keep on ringing in my mind. Even sometimes when I want to do something I ask myself, 'how will have my father done it?' My mother who keeps on saying if it was her time nothing would have stopped her (Edna).

...from earlier on my father believed in giving each one of us a chance whether male or female. Although as a person, he really valued his sons...he used to tell me he wished I were a son. So that one has really encouraged me, I have had confidence in myself... (Natasha).

The important role played by the parents in these women's careers is emphasised here probably because these parents went against tradition in those old days to send their daughters to school. The way these women emphasised the role of their parents in inspiring them to succeed in their early education and career implies that parents can play a very important role in bringing about change in attitudes towards women in the Kenyan society.

Most of the married women in this study emphasised the support of their spouses more than the married men. The husband's support took various forms (see section 9.2.4). However, not all the women received the support of their husbands in their career advancement. Natasha shared her experience:

When I married my late husband there was a difference in our educational levels and that is where the problem started... there was also a difference in the salary... I discovered that he was very insecure... When it came to a point where I was interested in pursuing a masters degree, our marital problems came to the climax. And by the time I was completing my masters degree I had really gone through a rough time and I decided that we separate. So we were separated when he died (Natasha).

Some men in this study recognised the support of their spouses in their career development. But these men's recognition was different from the one women had of their husbands. The support the men got and possibly expected from their wives was more of the nurturing aspect in that the wives provided a peaceful home environment:

I can say may be my family has helped me to succeed in my career because of the... you know when you have peace at home you are able to prepare to come and work (Arnold).

My family is ok, my mum, especially my mum has been very supportive, in terms of my education, and she prays for me every day. Well my daddy is just there... My brothers and my sisters are not really keen on the success of a person. Most of them will bring you burdens than solutions ... my children have been very supportive in anything I do... but you know apart from that support you also need to be focused as an individual. You may get support from family and from friends but if you are not focused you will not make it (Albert).

Mentors

One explanation advanced by some researchers for women's underrepresentation in management positions in Kenya is the absence of role models and mentors for young girls and women (Lodiaga and Mbevi 1995 and Nzomo 1995). Role models demonstrate the possibility of reaching certain positions (deans, vice chancellors) and a way of doing the job once it has been achieved. Hall (1996) observes that making career choices that lead to senior positions often depend on getting the right advice and support from people (mentors) already established in the system. According to Hall (ibid) mentors for women seeking promotion can serve two purposes. One, they act as a guide to unfamiliar male-dominated organisational culture. Two, they provide sponsorship and legitimate access to power.

Most of the women and men in this study had been inspired by various people (mentors) in their career development. Most of the mentors were identified as high school teachers, college tutors, parents and some successful women and men in society. The women and men described the inspiration from their mentors in various ways:

Even as a young girl I had a mathematics teacher who because he believed so much in me, he used to involve me in Mathematics

contests a lot so he developed a lot of confidence in me... Then when I went to colleague there were two ladies... I used to admire these women who in spite of being surrounded by men were there shining ... I really liked their confidence. Then as I am getting in to research one of my supervisors has been very instrumental (Natasha).

And when I was doing my postgraduate studies... there were those who had done PhD before like my lecturers... (she gives a long list of renowned women educationists and gender activists)... These were icons in my life that I wanted to perform like them. I wanted to come out like them. And I used to consult them a lot in terms of gender issues. I just wanted to be like them, achieve like them, stand out like them and you know be a woman of substance (Kristine).

One woman professor I work with in my projects. She herself has worked hard and she is now chair and was dean... She is a very bold sort of person and she is a fighter... I do admire her spirit of working hard and moving ahead and of course having been dean she has really had to fight quite a bit (Beatrice).

one of them is one of the professors who saw me through the first year of my project work, the kind of guidance, exposure, challenges he posed for me and the confidence he seemed to have developed in me... he believed in accuracy...he was very committed... he gave me direction...he was reflecting what I wanted and in that way he became my mentor (Geoffrey).

Some of the men and women managers were mentored by their biological parents:

One of them is my own mother... I saw a father in a mother. In fact I always say I have never had a mother but a female father because she was more of a father to me than a mother. She was a strong woman, always attentive and encouraging success... a very determined woman (Sofia).

So as I grew up my mother used to tell me it is only hard work... in what you are doing. I saw my mother in spite of the poverty she used to do farming, and used to do more than other men... until people were jealous. She had many animals, we used to milk and take to the dairy... I was also inspired by my father, he only reached class two but this is a man who actually became a chief of the area... when you looked at what this man did... the animals he was having, the kind of house he put up and the name he left behind... that was my first mentor... (Ian).

... in my biological father I could see that it is hard work which pushed him through the ranks...he started from scratch, from the little education he was given by his parents... as a primary school teacher he

rose up the ranks until he became one of the national administrators... he studied continued and upgraded through the ranks up to the university college (Derrick).

I was surprised at Sofia's and to some extent Ian's description of their mothers in masculine terms. I think this description was influenced by the fact her these two widowed women provided for their families and therefore were perceived to have taken on the responsibilities assumed to be men's in their tribes, for example, being involved in large scale farming and selling the produce to provide for the family. The fact that Sofia's father died quite early and the mother was able to provide for them and see them through their education made her to see the mother performing the role of the father. Sofia's and Ian's description of the roles played by their mothers in providing for their families appears to question some of the gender role perceptions held by some men in the modern Kenyan society (see section 8.3).

These women's descriptions of their mentors show that they got inspiration mainly from other women who had succeeded in their career before them. From their mentors women gained self-confidence, moral and intellectual support. On the other hand, the men managers looked up to their mentors in terms of the success and power they had been able to wield in spite of their humble beginnings (Ian and Derrick). From their mentors men gained exposure in their disciplines, confidence, desire to work hard and aspire for leadership positions in society.

An analysis of the attributes that contributed to the men's and women's career success appear to suggest that women in this context have to rely so much on family support especially their parents for their early education and probably career choices and their spouses for later career advancement. This could be explained by the fact that most domestic responsibilities and child rearing are still solely the domain of women. In addition to working hard and getting inspiration from mentors, these women need the good will of their families, both immediate and extended to be able to succeed in their career. The support from parents, especially in early education and career

development suggests that parents have an important role to play in spearheading the campaigns for gender equality in the Kenyan society.

6.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I have examined how the women and men in the two universities got appointed into management positions. A gender analysis of how these women and men got into management positions has shown that although these men and women joined university teaching in the same academic ranks, appointment of women to management positions took a longer time. It appears that the women in the public university follow what is considered the normal route into management position, that is acquired a PhD, raise up the academic ranks through publishing widely in one's field and acquire management experience at the department. However, these policies are sometimes relaxed when it comes to promoting and appointing men into management.

The data from this study on how the women accessed management positions appears to suggest that appointment and promotion policies and practices especially in the public university discriminate against women. The data corroborates feminist critical studies done outside Kenya (Brooks 1995, 1997, Chanana 2003, Toren 2003 and Bagihole and White 2003). For example, Bagihole and White 2003 in their extensive research in universities in the United Kingdom and Australia report that an important mechanism for the perpetuation of the domination of senior management of higher education by men is the "disjuncture between formal and informal appointment and promotion processes" in these institutions (p3). They argue that while formal processes seek to locate promotions and appointment within equal opportunity policies, affirmative action legislation and professional principles of merit, informal processes are not transparent enough and in some cases are discriminatory. This is because according to Bagihole and White (ibid) informal processes rely on "self- promotion, promotion by others, masculinist definitions of merit and subjective interpretation of policies" in ways that tend to marginalise and disadvantage women (p.5). Therefore, Bagihole and White conclude that the perception or allegation

that the best person is chosen for a position and appointed is a 'myth'. The data presented here supports this conclusion because the policies that are used to appoint university managers, especially in the public university are not transparent (See section 3.3.1). Again, although they presented as gender neutral or gender blind they are applied in gendered ways and therefore limit women's participation in university management (Bensimon and Marshall 1997). As a result of discriminatory appointment and promotion policies and practices for example in the public university, the women in this study appear to access management positions after achieving formal visibility through research and publication and offering their services in the departments in acting capacity (Chanana 2003) and therefore being better than men (Gupton and Slick 1996). In the next chapter I go on explore some of the practices in the two universities that impose challenges for the women managers.

Chapter Seven: Pressures at the top: ‘is it a brick wall or a hard rock?’

7.1 Introduction

In any job, there are a wide variety of potential pressures, some of which are common to both men and women. There are others, which are specific to each group. I have labelled this chapter pressures at the top, ‘is it a brick wall or a hard rock’ because I was struck by how consistently the interviewees talked simultaneously about the difficulty of combining management, teaching, research and publishing and family responsibilities. Both men and women emphasised that there were a lot of pressures on them as managers. However, one woman was more explicit and described her struggle of trying to balance her multiple roles as wife, mother, researcher, writer and manager as making her feel that she was caught between ‘*a brick wall and a hard rock.*’

In this chapter I explore the challenges these women faced as managers in their universities. Some of the challenges discussed include inadequate training and orientation, work overload, juggling personal and professional roles, unsupportive work environment, inadequate support from colleagues and balancing academic and management responsibilities. In the examination of these challenges I show how they impose an additional strain on the women managers.

7.2 Inadequate training and orientation in management skills

Dissatisfaction with training and inadequate orientation has been shown to present particular challenges for women and to some extent men managers (Davidson and Cooper 1992, Spurling 1997, Henkel 2000 and Wallace 2003). The dissatisfaction may be attributed to the fact that in most cases university managers do not receive any training for the positions they are appointed to.

Henkel (2000) in her interviews with academics and members of senior academic management teams in four universities in the UK found that:

... there was a strong sense among them of being unprepared. They had no systematic training. There were no 'scripts' for these roles, and the burden was on the individual to take advantage of whatever organised help there was and define and find their 'texts' for themselves... They had to learn 'on the hoof' and sometimes felt that the whole institution or even the whole system was doing the same' (Henkel 2000, p. 237 emphasis original).

Wallace (2003) in her interviews with seven women academic managers in an Australian regional university found that the women had not experienced any structured development for their management roles but instead they had gone "straight in the deep end" (p.7). Most of the women in Wallace's study had been prepared on the job as course co-ordinators, project managers or directors.

Most of the managers interviewed in this study had not received any training or orientation for the positions they were holding. For example, Ronald from the public university said:

...university managers are never trained to be managers. So people work without knowing what they are expected to do (Ronald).

Some of the women and men identified lack of training and orientation as the main reason why they initially hesitated to take up the appointments (see section 6.3). For some of the men and women in this study the abrupt nature of their appointments meant that they did not receive any orientation into their new positions:

I was told on the day before the students were arriving that I was in charge of that programme. I knew nothing about it... I can say one of the challenges I faced then was the abrupt nature of the appointment and I had not even been involved in planning the programme...I did not know what the job entailed. It was a period of discovery, there was no one to tell me, 'do this or that' (Eunice).

.... Imagine you are not given any orientation and they expect you to perform... there is no job description... I only have the appointment letter telling me you are now the manager of this... I found it a bit tough... (Connex).

Unfortunately there was no orientation...incidentally even the outgoing manager had not been informed about my appointment... And when he got his letter I asked him 'how do we move, can you hand over?' He was also in an awkward situation, he was like 'there is nothing to hand over, the files are there, so you just find your way, the secretary is also there...so I started with difficulties (Geoffrey).

The experiences of these interviewees suggest that appointments to management positions were in some cases quite abrupt. As a result there was no orientation or induction given to them. From these experiences it would appear that the policies stipulated in the university statutes with regard to the appointment of university managers were not followed when some of these women's and men's appointments were being made.

However, some men in the private university did not perceive lack of training and orientation as a challenge. This was because they were aware that there was no training that is specifically tailored towards the needs of university managers in the country. As a result they were of the opinion that learning on the job is the best training available for university managers. Ian from the private university posed:

... where will I go, where someone will tell me 'this is how to handle a university...? we have courses at the Kenya Institute of Administration but they mainly talk about public administration. So what happens at the end of the day is that you learn on the job or sometimes learning on the job could be the best... that way you know actually what the requirements of the office are... (Ian).

Arnold from the same university added that:

The moment you are appointed to a position you should start looking around and find out how to develop your capability to run the office... take the initiative. Training is the most ideal but it may not be forthcoming... like when somebody is appointed vice chancellor it may not be easy to find training tailored to the role of vice chancellor in a university. Maybe for the heads of departments and deans it may be easy to organise some training... but the most practical part is where you take the initiative, own interest in trying to gather some information on how to run the institution (Arnold).

Effects of inadequate training and orientation on managers' performance

The challenge of inadequate training and orientation had various effects on the performances of the manager's duties. Some of these effects are related to what Spurling (1997, p.46) identifies as the drawbacks of accelerated promotions not backed up by training, counselling or mentoring in any career structure. The first drawback Spurling (ibid) identifies is insufficient management experience for the degree of responsibility. This is often revealed by poor decision making skills and inadequacy in dealing with people and their problems. Some of the interviewees said that they had difficulties in making decisions and dealing with their colleagues when they were first appointed. Some of their experiences are summarised here:

... so my first few years... I tended to be very harsh when dealing with the administration... after two years I realised I was not being very successful or even getting what I wanted... I had used too much energy and in the process I was angry and finally getting ulcers... I also found it extremely difficult... dealing with the top university managers... In the beginning I had a lot of problems dealing with my own colleagues... And so for the first time when I got into administration, if you do not do your work properly I send you a memo... unfortunately these people who were not doing their work, when they received memos they became very aggressive... they started accusing me falsely.. they started complaining that there were memos flying everywhere. ... I remember one time it became so bad that the top management became involved and I wanted to resign... (Ronald).

... I got into the department and there was a new secretary. And we could do letters, and then we do one copy... we did not know that we needed to leave a copy in our file... so people would make applications for this or the other, they don't even put their personal file number, then the document comes asking that, 'where is the personal file number?... or sometimes somebody writes a letter and they are supposed to attach certain documents and that is not done. I remember documents kept on coming back because they were not complete or the right procedure had not been followed... another challenge was making decisions (Edna).

The second drawback of inadequate training and orientation according to Spurling (ibid) is inexperience in policy making. Eunice from the private university shared her experience:

... I had to call meetings, which I had never done before... and some policy issues had to be addressed... I found myself dealing with issues that I had not dealt with before... (Eunice).

The third effect of accelerated promotion without adequate training according to Spurling (ibid) is limited experience of formal committee work and the informal work that underpins it. Edna in this study talked about the sitting arrangement in the public university that new managers were often not aware of:

And then simple things like you go to a meeting and you don't know what is expected of you. This university has a tradition on how people sit in senate meetings. The deans sit in their places... I have seen new managers just coming and they just sit anywhere and when the right people for those seats come, they are asked to move and this is a bit uncomfortable... (Edna).

The fourth drawback of accelerated promotion Spurling (Ibid) identifies is jealousy from contemporaries and former peers. For some managers in this study their promotions or appointments were not received well by their colleagues. Sofia and Albert from the public university shared their experiences:

Another challenge I have faced is discouragement ... not direct discouragement but people blocking your way, cutting under... you want to do things and then you find some people blocking you. People are threatened by your success. And most of these, both ... female and male fear that you are coming up fast (Sofia).

There is also that ill feeling among colleagues, you know... I think Kenyans have a very bad culture... of pulling one another down... They do not like, you know, if you are growing up, you will hear somebody saying, 'this guy is growing very fast, and him he is very fast, what is he up to? It is not moving fast, it is doing your job. (Albert).

The last drawback is the escalation of family-career conflicts when the individuals, their partners and families have insufficient time for structural and psychological adjustment to each new level of career demand. Some women managers in this study experienced this conflict (see Kristine experience in section 7.4). Spurling (1997) observes that these drawbacks are typical of people who have not been adequately prepared for the level of responsibility given to them and who have insufficient institutional support.

Spurling (ibid) however, argues that these drawbacks of inadequate training and orientation are often magnified in the case of women because they are more isolated than men at management levels. Indeed the women in this study perceived themselves to be under great pressure to perform and prove that they were capable by working hard to avoid making any mistakes.

Although some of the managers in these interviews were of the opinion that learning on the job is the most practical strategy I think it may have some repercussions for some, especially women. This is because in the process of learning on the job or using trial and error the newly appointed managers are likely to make mistakes. Some of these mistakes can prove fatal for some, especially women, who are mainly appointed in acting capacity initially to prove their capability (see section 6.2). Some women in this study emphasised the fact that the parameters for judging women and men's performance are not the same. They thought that women are judged more harshly than men and therefore should guard against committing mistakes whenever they are given management responsibilities. Kristine and Sofia from the public university made this observation when talking about why women are appointed in acting position:

I think these are some of the challenges because they specifically do that [appoint you in an acting capacity] to look at you and to prove yourself that you are capable and you know of course the parameters for judging women in terms of managerial skills are usually more pronounced than for men. For example, you find that if you make a mistake ... it is blown out of proportion. Because they want to say that you have failed because you are a woman. So actually you have to work *double* or even *triple* for that matter to prove your capability [my emphasis]. Because one thing they are not going to judge you as a person and say, 'you are so and so, you have failed us in terms of administration'. They are going to use it even against other women. They are going to say women as whole, you see, we gave them the opportunity and they were not able to deliver. So you feel that you are a role model for other women, you are also a pacesetter for other women. And you feel that it is your obligation to prove that women have the ability what they need is to be given the chance or the opportunity (Kristine).

...why I am saying this is because if a man makes a mistake people do not notice it at all, like you see the Bomas walk out yesterday [she was referring to an incident where government ministers, all men, walked out of the constitutional review conference because the delegates refused to endorse a clause the government was trying to include in the constitution on the powers of the executive] if it was a women's meeting I don't know where we could be now. You see when men fight, they even fight physically in parliament [Men fighting in parliament and in local councils is very common in Kenya]...of course we are annoyed, we talk about it but it is not serious. So women have a *double task* [my emphasis] to avoid making careless mistakes and negligence of duty just for the sake of it (Sofia).

Some men in the study were not so concerned about the fact they would make mistakes while learning on the job because they were given more time to learn. For example, when Gordon was first promoted to a more senior position within the university (see his 'big jump' in section 6.2) his immediate managers doubted his ability to perform but because he had the support of the vice chancellor, who had appointed him, they had to be patient with him as he learned on the job.

And then with my bosses...there was a feeling ... that probably they didn't trust my ability... so it was like there was a lot of pressure that 'are you really going to measure up to it?' or something like that... But because then you know the chief executive [vice chancellor] who had called upon me to take up this position seemed to have given me time to learn... they had to be patient with me (Gordon).

A feminist critical analysis of the challenge of inadequate training reveals some bias against women in the sense that whereas most men are appointed directly to their positions, almost all the women interviewed here except Claire were first appointed in acting capacity before being confirmed. In fact some women like Kristine in the public university, were still in an acting capacity at the time of the interviews, two years after her first appointment. This data appears to suggest that women are expected to learn on the job and prove that they are capable before being appointed or confirmed in management positions. Therefore in as much as inadequate training and orientation affected the men and women interviewed in this study, the women suffered an additional disadvantage because when they learnt on the job and made mistakes that may be related to inadequate training or orientation, and they were likely to be judged more harshly than their male

counterparts. This perhaps is the reason why some of the women like Connex from the private university interpreted the inadequate orientation they experienced as being aimed at setting them up to fail because they were women. Connex said:

... I found it a bit tough... sometimes you can see the male administrators saying, 'why should I tell her?... it is her responsibility to find out'... so somebody is trying to put you in a trap so that you fail (Connex).

From a feminist critical analysis perspective I argue that the women in this study were being subjected to more testing than men by being appointed in acting capacity initially before being confirmed. Being appointed to an acting position merely added to the workload for the women because they did not enjoy the remuneration and authority that accompanies a confirmed appointment. Instead it is the people, mostly the men, whom they were acting on behalf, who got the credit and the prestige (Mabokela 2003). Furthermore when in an acting capacity these women perceived themselves to be under intense scrutiny and therefore they worked extra hard to prove themselves (see section 9.2.1).

7.3 Work overload

Various metaphors have been used by feminist researchers to describe the heavy responsibilities borne by women in universities as academics and managers. Groombridge (2003) likens academic women to *camels*. Groombridge (ibid) observes that women, as excellent community citizens in universities, usually undertake more teaching and service work, in particular service work that is not highly valued. They get involved in counselling students rather than chairing committees, the types of service that is seen to be a chore and optional. In addition to teaching, community service and family responsibilities they are still expected to do research and publish to gain promotion.

Elsewhere Mabokela (2003) in her study on workplace experiences of six senior women managers in South African institutions of higher education found that the women perceived themselves as *donkeys* of the university. As

donkeys the women were frequently charged with challenging responsibilities within the institutions but they did not receive recognition and respect befitting their efforts. Instead, Mabokela (ibid) found that there was general resistance to the women's administrative authority. The women interviewed by Mabokela (ibid) also perceived themselves as tokens who were always under scrutiny by their male colleagues but also by women. One woman in Mabokela (2003) said:

There are pressures, very serious psychological pressures to do well and do better. I spend enormous number of hours in this office, in evenings and on weekends.... I know I cannot afford to fail and I know I share this with other women (p.137).

Work overload can be either "quantitative, that is, there is too much to do or qualitative meaning that the work is too difficult" (Davidson and Cooper 1992, p.43). The men and women interviewed in this study experienced quantitative work overload because the offices they occupied were too demanding and this had impacted negatively on their personal lives and career development. Some of the interviewees' experiences relating to work overload are summarised here:

I think the other challenge is work... this office has a lot of work... For sure in this office unless you calculate your time properly... I look at it that you are an administrator and an academic... you have to be very careful... there is so much that you have to put into administration than the rest. So there is pressure on the time factor. You cannot go to the house and read... the head is overworked... you can easily forget about books. It can also eat into your social life (Ian).

Well you know my dream is to complete my academic level, you know to get my PhD but I think the volume of work ...has made it completely impossible for me to do anything especially for my own personal academic development... I think that wherever I have gone ...I keep on getting many assignments even outside my office ... you know being involved in so many committees... So besides the normal track of the work that you are given, that is, administration, teaching and community service... there are all those others outside that area which are really bogging me down... the other is that ...in a private university the expectation is higher than in the public university (Arnold).

In the process I have encountered a lot of challenges among which is time distribution. I have so much to do. I have a family, all these demand my time. In fact my day is so crowded that at the end of it all my energy is gone (Sofia).

There is a lot of work in this office... things just crop up. You cannot plan for your day... there are meetings to attend... so I end up carrying on with office work at home in the evening (Eunice).

The experiences of these interviewees suggest that they were experiencing quantitative work overload. Further analysis of the experiences shows that work overload is experienced differently in the public and private university. I now examine how work overload was experienced in the two institutions.

Work overload in the public university

In the public university, work overload was mostly attributed to the abrupt nature and number of meetings, poor management style, poor communication and ignorance on the part of the academic staff members. Some of the managers in the public university shared their experiences:

Impromptuness of meetings, urgency... sometimes things which we knew many weeks, many months before, then they take us as emergency... our communication system is not very good, either information comes late or it does not come at all ...and then there are many people who work here and really don't know what goes on... so you are dealing with people who sometimes don't know procedures... very few of us make the effort to read the statutes and even the university act... because it stipulates who does what and why they do it (Edna).

...one other aspect, which really eats into most of my time, is the meetings. I attend a number of meetings in addition to teaching postgraduate and undergraduate courses...the conflict is that the meetings also sometimes disrupt my effectiveness.... Sometimes you come in the morning when you are planning for something and you find there is a meeting you are supposed to attend (Geoffrey).

As result of the ad hoc nature of the meetings in the public university, most managers were not able to plan for their time properly before hand. This could be the reason why some of them did not keep office diaries (see

section 5.4.2). Again most of them preferred starting work very early (7.00 am) so that they can attend to other issues before going for the meetings. Meetings usually start at 9.00 am and can run up to late in the evening (6.00 pm). During the fieldwork I had difficulties fixing time for the interviews because some of the managers in the public university were only available for interview between 7.00 am and 8.00 am. This timing was not possible for me because I lived far from the university. As a result of this timing I was forced to replace some of the prospective interviewees identified by my contact person.

I observed and witnessed many of the abrupt meetings at the public university during the fieldwork. On several occasions I arrived for an interview with the respondents and found that they were in a meeting or were about to go for one. As a result I had many appointments that were not honoured and this caused me a lot of stress. On one occasion I had an appointment for 9.00 am with Beatrice. I arrived at the office at a round 8.50 am and found that she had not arrived. She arrived a few minutes later. After entering her office, her secretary followed with a letter inviting her for a meeting scheduled for 10.00 o'clock that morning. Beatrice was not pleased with the short notice, as she had made other plans for the day. During the interview Beatrice told me that the ad hoc nature of meetings in this university was affecting her performance as manager.

Work overload in the private university

On the other hand work overload in the private university was mostly attributed to inadequate human and material resources and to the fact that the university was held more accountable by the students who paid directly for their education. I observed that managers in the private university did not have the material resources similar to those in the public university. For example, most of the managers interviewed in the public university had two secretaries, a tea lady, one messenger (mostly men) and an administrative assistant attached to their offices. Although most managers in the public university had computers in their offices, their secretaries/copy typists did

most of their typing. The office space in the public university was also quite big and there was room to accommodate all these support staff. There was a kitchen attached to the manager's offices where tea was prepared. In most offices there was a nicely laid out coffee table with thermo flasks and cups in the manager's office.

The case was different in the private university where resources (material and human) were scarce. In the private university unless the position occupied was very senior (dean, vice chancellor, deputy vice chancellor) there was no personal secretary attached to the manager's office. Instead, there were one or two secretaries in a secretarial pool who served about three departments. There were no administrative assistants, tea ladies or messengers attached to managers' offices in the private university. Tea was taken in one central place by all staff in the university. Most of managers in the private university did not have computers in their offices. Some of the managers in the private university interviewed here attributed their work overload to inadequate resources. Eunice made this observation:

This university lacks facilities; things like computers that can ease our work...The secretaries are in a secretarial pool and although they are quite efficient it becomes a bit of a problem... you want photocopying, you want something urgent... basically you have to do a lot of walking around... so the day to day office work coupled with the other issues that you have to deal with is quite demanding... (Eunice).

Richard from the same university who had also worked in a public university made this comparison:

Here you find yourself doing a job that probably used to be done by say five people in the public university. So you find that even when you go through that door, you do not go through a secretary, you come direct... the uniqueness [of a private university] is that you are trying to mobilise the little resources by making sure it is well spent... there is much more of responsibility and accountability here... the job depends on you... in the public university they have excessive labour force... (Richard).

The workload in the private university was also attributed to the need for accountability and value for money. Since the students in the private university pay for their education they hold the managers and staff in these institutions accountable. There is also pressure to perform in order to

impress the students and parents and to get good results. Arnold from the private university explained:

I find myself working three times more than I was working in the public university. Here the students keep us on our toes. You know they are supposed to evaluate us and make sure that they get the value for their money.... (Arnold).

Additional workload for women

The men and women in this study seem to be faced with the same challenge of work overload but again increasingly women are disadvantaged because of the multiple roles they play and the social expectations in the society. Kristine from the public university observed that as a woman manager she had to work harder in order to prove herself. She said:

...you must put measures in place to ensure that whatever you are doing you leave no room for criticisms. Because you know that the criticism is never going to be positive... when you delegate activities, you put in place what I would call risk signals... you don't want to create an atmosphere where you are waiting for results and then by the end of the time frame you realise you have not achieved your goal... you keep re-evaluating and monitoring until you get whatever you wanted to achieve (Kristine).

A number of studies done elsewhere have found that women managers are frequently subjected to work overload due to the pressure to work harder in order to prove that they are capable (Davidson and Cooper, 1992, Gupton and Slick 1996, Marshall 1984, 1995, Quina et al 1998 and Mabokela 2003). These studies suggest that the work overload for women results from the perception that women have to be better at their job compared to their male colleagues in order to succeed. Davidson and Cooper (1992) in their survey of women managers in various organisations in the UK found that work overload, too much to do and too little time was identified as the leading stressor, even though many women acknowledged that much of this was self imposed. Davidson and Cooper (ibid) also found that the women in their survey were not willing to delegate due to either lack of self-confidence or because they felt they wanted to maintain control in case anything goes wrong. One middle manager in their survey said:

No, I don't find it easy to delegate, it's a major weakness of mine. In fact that is one of my stress points, in that I 'd rather do it myself when

somebody else could do it... it is not that I don't trust other people, it's just that I'd rather keep tabs on it all the time so I know exactly what is going on. Maybe it has to do with the fact that I will get blamed if something goes wrong (Davidson and Cooper 1992, p.44).

Quina et al (1998) writing on the glass ceiling women experience in higher education institutions in the US observe that "women's competence is often devalued and this results in women having to work so hard to prove themselves". According to Quina et al (ibid) despite the low expectation or devaluing of women's ability, women are not "allowed to fail as much as men". If women succeed, their success is more likely to be attributed to external factors such as "luck, ease of task or high effort whereas men's success is more likely to be attributed to high ability and men's failure to bad luck and hard task" (p.226).

The evidence from this study suggests that the women interviewed perceived themselves as being expected to work harder in order to prove themselves. The pressure on the women in this study to prove that they were capable of being managers appears to make them work more hours and this results in work overload for them that is different from the one experienced by the men in the same context. Again the abruptness and urgency with which issues are handled in the public university is likely to affect men and women differently. Whereas the men may find it much easier to cancel their plans at short notice when they are called upon to attend a meeting or travel away from home at short notice, women in this context will need more time to organise themselves because of their multiple roles.

7.4 Combining personal and professional roles

In this section I explore some of the challenges the women and men interviewed in the study faced in trying to combine the personal and professional roles. A personal role is used in this context to refer to family responsibilities such as childbearing, childrearing, household chores and socialising with friends and family outside office hours. A professional role

on the other hand is used to refer to all academic and management tasks resulting from the position the men and women occupied in the university.

Extensive research done in universities in Australia, Canada, Europe, North America and Africa (Ainseberg and Harrington 1988, Davis and Astin 1990, Lie 1990, Kanake 1997, De la Rey 1998, Currie et al 2000, O'Laughlin and Bischoff 2001, Kwesiga 2002, Raddon 2002, Wallace 2003, Wolf-Wendel and Ward 2003, Chesterman et al 2003, Makobela 2003, Bond 2003, Acker and Armenti 2004, and Armenti 2004) show that women experience considerable conflict when combining work and family responsibilities. The main reason why women experience more pressure than men is that generally work in the home is divided along gender lines (Lie 1990). Beutell and Greenhaus (1985) cited in O' Laughlin and Bischoff 2001, p.3) identifies three types of conflict that career women face in relation to combining personal and professional roles. The first is *time-based conflict*, which occurs when time pressures from one role make it impossible to comply with the expectations of another role. The second is *strain-based conflict*, which occurs when the stress of one role impacts on one's performance in another role. The last one is *behaviour-based conflict*, which occurs when behaviours expected in one role are incompatible with behaviours expected in another role.

All the women and some men interviewed in this study indicated in different ways that they experienced time based, strain based and behaviour based conflicts in their attempts to combine personal and professional roles. For most of the women the challenge was as a result of the division of labour in the home along traditional gender roles and the separation between the private and public spheres in the Kenyan society. Some of their experiences are summarised here:

The other challenge is like right now in addition to my normal teaching and management duties of course there is the time for my family. I have to make sure I attend to them and also being a single widowed lady my children are in boarding school, I have to rush for parents

meetings... for academic days at the same time I have to make sure I am not lagging behind in my duties as a manager (Natasha).

...For example, in your house people expect you to cook. They expect you to do the washing... and you are not there to do it at the right time. They feel like you are not playing your motherly role. I have had one of my sons say that he will make sure that his wife is going to be cooking the family meal. Maybe that is a point attacking me since I don't cook the family meal as much... And then in the office you find that sometimes you have a home domestic issue, which cannot allow you to come to the office. For example, you have a sick child or maybe your househelp has left without notice ... so you have to call the office and tell them you are not going to be able to come and of course they do not take it kindly. They will see it as a woman's problem. I remember one headteacher who was heading one secondary school telling us that we should take our sick children to our neighbours so that they can take them to the hospital because we were supposed to be in the office regardless of what was happening in our home front. So those are some of the challenges but we try to ensure that we balance the two because both of them are part and parcel of your life. You want to grow as a family member and you also want to grow in your career (Kristine).

The experiences of Kristine and Natasha summarise the contradictions they face both as mothers/wives and career women. These contradictions are exacerbated by the socio-cultural expectations of women in the Kenyan society. For example, these women were expected to spend more time with their families than the men. If they were spending a lot of time in their offices or in the field doing research then the family, especially the husband, felt that they were being neglected. Kristine gave this example:

And many times I am in the field ... doing research and sometimes working extra hours in the office work... so by the time I get home... I still feel the family doesn't appreciate that. They feel like I have neglected them.... I remember one time my husband telling me "eeh now you are going, one day we are going to meet you somewhere and you start asking us where you had met us" implying actually that I am out of their life (Kristine).

On the other hand some of the men in this study considered it normal to be away from home for long hours. For example, Arnold from the private university found it ok to spend only a few hours with the family in the evenings:

And as long as I am able to be in the house every evening they are sort of comfortable ... if we are able to be together on Sunday you know it

is again quite ok... I think it helps me to relax with them in the evening and in readiness to come to work you know with some freshness in the following day (Arnold).

The comment by Arnold appears to suggest that the men in this context assume that a few hours at home are sufficient for the family. Again the family or home is perceived by Arnold as a place for relaxing and refreshing in readiness for the next day's job. This is different for the women like Kristine who are expected to perform domestic chores in spite of their busy professional lives. The cultural expectations of husbands and wives in this society lead to time based and behaviour based conflicts for women more than men. As Natasha who is a single woman explains:

I spend a lot of hours here in the office... And I believe for example if I had a husband I would not be doing that... it would be expecting too much for a husband to be really happy with the amount of time I am spending in the office... if it is the husband putting in a lot of time in his office work... it will be taken to be normal and the wife will not be expected to complain... As a wife if you do that you will be accused of ignoring your husband... (Natasha).

The data here suggests that women or wives in this culture are expected to understand and support the husbands in their professional career advancement. Geoffrey felt that there was no conflict in his personal and professional roles. He said:

... I have brought it to the *understanding* [my emphasis] of my family what exactly it is I am involved in. So in situations where there is too much demand on this side [office] there is still no tension or the feeling on the part of the family that we are being ignored. So it is like they are with me in this issue... there are really no conflicts as such (Geoffrey).

The expectation that wives should understand and support their husbands in their career serves to reposition women as subordinate in the family set up. Reis (2002) in her in depth interviews with 64 English, German and Portuguese male managers working in one large German multinational company operating in 180 countries all over the world, found that these men relied heavily on their wives labour for the advancement of their management career. The men managers in Reis's study also expected their wives to understand and support them in their career advancement and performance of their management roles. Reis (ibid) also found that understanding on the part of the managers' wives meant that they "suppress

their emotions as if they were invisible human being and at the same time be very strong, supportive and particularly fulfil their domestic duties in a very caring manner”(p.200). A feminist critical analysis of the understanding expected from men managers’ wives by Reis (ibid) revealed that they are expected to “put up with bad-tempered husbands, if things are not going well at work and late arrivals in the night”. This dimension of understanding Reis (ibid) argues meant that “wives should wait patiently, should accept and should be strong whatever happens” (p.200). In the Kenyan context, this type of understanding is not expected of husbands of women managers (see Kristine’s and Natasha’s experiences above).

One woman manager in this study felt that there was no conflict between her personal and professional roles because she had been able to prioritise her responsibilities and make her family aware of what her job entailed:

First of all let me say I am overcrowded... But again I know the priorities in my life... You know I am a teacher and I am also a writer. When I am finishing and writing a project, which is bothering me with deadlines, I make sure everyone is aware. People at home and people in the office. So for example if it is my boss I tell him I have a deadline to meet and I need an afternoon off, he will always grant this because he knows... tomorrow morning I will be at work... the same case applies to my family... when I call and say today I am working late because there is a deadline I have to meet... I have got a lot of support from home (Sofia).

Sofia’s views appear to suggest that so long as the family and the office are aware of what somebody is doing or the pressures one is undergoing then they will give the necessary support that will enhance the balancing of personal and professional roles. A feminist critical analysis of the views expressed by Sofia reveals some conflict in the sense that Sofia enjoys support from home and the office probably because she works long hours and at the same time performs the duties expected of her as a wife “when she is not *busy*” [my emphasis]:

Because when I am not busy ... I will make dinner for them. When I am very busy and even when everybody is going away on holiday, I will say , no, leave me behind because there is something I want to do and you find that everybody respects that. So I will honestly say I haven’t had a problem with combining my personal and professional responsibilities. My problem is actually getting tired... I get really

tired... What I have realised again is that the people at home what they need is quality time... again you have to know your duties as a woman... (Sofia).

In spite of Sofia saying that she doesn't have difficulty combining personal and professional roles, it would appear that she is experiencing some conflict. Sofia confesses that sometimes she has to work really hard to the extent of even being stressed to make up for the time she gets off from the office or home when she is working to meet a deadline.

For some men and women the conflict between personal and professional roles was beginning to be less intense because they did not have young children:

...Maybe I was lucky; I married very early, when I was in the university. So in fact nearly all my children are grown up now. So at the time I started working in the university, they were already in high school or at university. Three have finished the university now... So the attention I was supposed to give my people I gave them a long time ago... so what I am saying is that family life started very early, so that by the time I was getting these heavy responsibilities, the kids crying in the house were no longer there, that has definitely helped (Arnold).

Ok I do not have the demands of young children. My children are teenagers now so that relieves quite a bit...I have tried as much as possible to kind of have a systematic way of handling my house work. As the children get older I realise I am getting away from that system (Edna).

The fact that most of the women in these interviews did not have young children may have made it possible for them to juggle the personal and professional roles. Research done elsewhere has shown that childbearing and childrearing responsibilities have a negative impact on women's career advancement more than men's in universities and other organisations (Scase and Geoffee 1989, Lie 1990, Kanake 1997, De la Rey 1998, Armenti 2004, Ward and Wolf-Wendel 2004 and Odejide 2005). For example, a Kenyan woman academic interviewed by Kanake (1997) said that her childrearing responsibilities were the main reason why her career was not progressing. She said:

No one has discriminated against me. It is all my fault. I have taken along time to write my PhD proposal... I need sometime for my young girl because I intend to travel for fieldwork and I cannot travel with her (Woman academic quoted in Kanake 1997, p 58).

Elsewhere Armenti (2004) in her study of 19 women academics selected from different faculties and ranks in one Canadian university found that some of the women believed in the necessity of carefully planning their pregnancies around their demanding work timetables. The women in her study believed that having children before obtaining tenure was detrimental to their career prospects. As a result of these fears the women in Armenti's study depicted what they called the "May Baby phenomenon", meaning that they tried to give birth in the month of May (p.217). Similar findings are reported by De la Rey (1998) in her interviews with 25 women professors in South African universities. De la Rey found that some of the women she interviewed had made conscious plans not to have children because of their academic careers. Those women who had children had to make decisions about the timing of their pregnancies and the number of children. De la Rey also found that coping with the demands of career, wife and mother demanded a great deal of energy on the part of the women as these demands were often in conflict or in potential tension. The women in De la Rey (ibid, p.36) used the word "lucky" to refer to how they coped with the potential tensions between personal and professional roles.

The men and women interviewed here were in agreement that their social lives had greatly suffered because of the excessive demands on their time as academics and managers. Most of the men were concerned that they had cut down so much on their social evenings or outing with friends. The managers interviewed here were missing out on family holidays or even annual leave because they were working under pressure in order to meet certain deadlines. This was the case whether one was single or married. Some of the comments suggesting this include:

I do not involve myself in many social activities... in other words going out, with people at night... so I am always in the house (Arnold).

... when it comes to affecting social life, for example the social aspect of my life... sometimes because of the kind of effort I put in the university, there are times I avoid some of the social events (Ian).

So you have to either sacrifice certain parts of your life or work under pressure or you have to go away from home at very short notice or at very odd times. I know people have spent Christmas week doing office work. It not only oppresses you but maybe the family has organised something and then you miss out (Edna).

The narratives on combining personal and professional roles in this study reveal the conflicting nature of these roles and the many contradictions involved. Feminist critical analysis research has attributed the conflict and contradictions to two main reasons. The first reason is that the division of labour in the home is still along traditional gender roles. Under this arrangement women are allowed into the public sphere but are still left with all the duties of the private sphere. The argument is often that “it is fine if a woman wants to be a president as long as she can manage her family’s needs for nurturance and support too” (Marshall 1999, p.70). Lie (1990) argues that the division of labour within the family partially determines how much difficulty women have in juggling career and family roles. This division of labour disadvantages women who have to work a second shift at home when men sit and relax in readiness for the next day’s work. This is the experience of most Kenyan women who have taken on careers. A woman academic interviewed in Kanake (1997) shared her experience:

My husband is a lecturer at the university of Nairobi. We sometimes arrive home at the same time in the evenings. I go straight to the kitchen while he sits... to relax, read a newspaper or watch television. When he is busy, he locks himself in the study room so that he is not disturbed. How can I be compared with time? It is very difficult for me to pursue a PhD course or get fully involved in research especially now that I have a young family (Woman academic quoted in Kanake 1997, p.26).

The second reason is that academic careers are based on a male model. This model assumes freedom from competing responsibilities such as family that generally affect women more than men. In this career model women are cumulatively disadvantaged. Ward and Wolf-Wendel (2004) observe that the idealised trajectory of an academic career from graduate school to assistant professor, associate and full professor in direct succession, may not describe

the actual or the expected career of an academic woman. This is because in the interest of spouses, children, or personal commitment, women may extend or suspend their graduate school careers, wait to join the professoriate late or attempt to stop or slow the tenure clock. The male career model and the male culture in the universities serve to marginalise women academics (Currie and Thiele 2001, Allport 1996, Castleman et al 1994 and Eveline 1994). Currie and Thiele (2001) observe that marginalisation is achieved by making men's advantage and male career model appear "normal and gender neutral" by rewarding those academic women who behave like men by working long hours and leaving domestic responsibilities to others (p.92). Although this argument is based on academic careers outside Kenya it is relevant to the women in this study, because their management careers are closely linked with their academic careers (see section 6.2).

Following these reasons and the narratives of the women in this study I argue that women are disadvantaged in this context because they shoulder most of the domestic responsibilities and this is likely to affect the performance of their professional roles. Because the university culture ignores the personal roles that women perform, the women interviewed in this study were working really hard to combine the two roles.

7.5 Unsupportive work environment

A supportive work environment is crucial for career development for both men and women (Gupton and Slick 1996). Although most of the managers interviewed here perceived their work environment to be generally supportive, some (both in the public and private university) felt the environment in the public university was not conducive to the manager's performance of their duties. Some managers thought that the interference by the government in the management of public universities denied them the academic freedom and autonomy that was guaranteed in the university statutes. Gordon from the public university when talking about some of the challenges he faced as manager made this observation:

...then of course the other part is having to work within a politicised university atmosphere. At times you are not in a position to really make a decision on your own entirely. Because in as much as you may have a point of view it has to be sort of trimmed according to what the state wants. So you find that you cannot have much freedom... it is something that somebody in management cannot ignore... That people who matter in the university programmes have to be pushed and relegated to the periphery ... you only organise the programme then let it to the state or the security machinery, to run it and you are pushed back (Gordon).

The fact that the president of the republic of Kenya was the chancellor of all public universities until June 2003 with powers to hire and fire senior managers made the university staff, academic and administrative, associate the university managers with the government's misdeeds in society. For some managers in the public university political change in the wider society had brought new demands for them because it also implied change within the institution. Albert from the public university said:

In the year 2002, just after the parliamentary and presidential elections, some of us decided that it is high time that the university also recognises that such an institution is a dynamic institution. It must accept and embrace change if it has to survive. So we put our heads together...we picked the mantles of reconstituting the Academic Staff Union...so that we use it to instil a sense of responsibility and accountability among our managers...the vice chancellor did not take it lightly. So it became a war between some of us and him. It was such a bad war that we had to call in the anti-corruption police to embark on an investigation. Some of us were threatened with sacking but we said the system must change if we have to improve the operations of the university...we appealed to the government and the chancellor then, who was the president and we gave the ideas that we wanted implemented. Eventually the vice chancellor was removed, we got a new vice chancellor who is a very good listener and he believes in corporate management, which is one of the things we were pursuing (Albert).

For Edna in the public university, who occupied an elective position, the change in government imposed new demands on her as a manager. People kept on asking her what change she was going to bring if she was elected to the position she was campaigning for:

This coming very soon after the national elections, you know the country was still in this grip of electioneering, people were saying 'we

want change, so what change are you going to bring? And you know to answer that is not easy, you know, you are getting into a system and you cannot change things over night (Edna).

However, some managers in the public university were not happy with the rate at which changes were being implemented within the university. There was a feeling that these changes were being implemented without proper planning and consultations. Gordon explained:

The transition period in the Kenyan society brought a feeling in the people that everything has to change, even good things had to go. So with time what we have seen is change of vice chancellors. Our own vice chancellor here had to be sort of pushed out of the system. And the people who brought that change sort of propagated the notion that they were doing it in compliance with the philosophy of the current government...So now here there is the idea of positions like this having to be advertised. So this is bringing a bit of misunderstanding and some pressure to the people who are currently in the positions. One thing is that you feel there is no appreciation of the work you are doing... But when it is being put in a way that whoever has been there or whoever is there at the moment they are not the right people... this way it may not bring the right change in terms of the management of universities... People might just use the current wave to even victimise people with whom they had personal differences in the past (Gordon).

The politicised environment in which the managers in the public university worked appeared to cause anxiety and uncertainty especially among the men managers more than the women in this study. One possible reason for anxiety among the men is that they were likely to loose their positions hence their power due to the new appointments that were likely to be made. It is also possible that the men were appointed to the positions because of political patronage or tribalism (see section 6.2). Women were perhaps less anxious about loosing their positions because they occupied less powerful positions. Another possible reason for the women's lack of anxiety might be the culture in the Kenyan society that expects women not to be actively involved in the struggle for power and overall politics (see sections 2.3.3 and 8.3). The politicised environment was a source of pressure for the managers in the public university and therefore made the performance of their work more difficult than for those in the private university.

Another source of pressure for the managers in the public university was the antagonism between academic managers and administrative managers. Ronald thought this antagonism resulted from the fact that:

The link between academic managers and the administrative managers is really far apart... I think there is generally a big problem in the public universities up to now where we have administrators doing their own things and the academics doing their own things... in many of our public universities they have made what we call equivalent grades... so they think that when you are a senior administrator, you are equivalent to a certain level of academic staff and therefore what happens sometimes is that when you go there [administration] if you are lower or higher in rank, these people look at you from that perspective. I am a professor so what is this fellow telling me... So, for example, you want to take students for a trip and it has already been approved but you have to go and plead with a finance officer to release the funds. I think that is a big problem (Ronald).

Another feature that makes the environment in the public university unsupportive to the managers' performance is the conservatism and bureaucracy. Some of the women described their experience:

Public universities have very rigid structures, very rigid ways of handling things.... And that sometimes is the undoing of the university management. There is a lot of bureaucracy, which actually do not augur well with the managers within. You find that even though you are given a management role, some of the resources that you require for your staff have to be approved by other people and you find that sometimes it is not easy and sometimes they don't see things the way you see them because they are operating within a very rigid structure which has no room for new innovations... there are a lot of hurdles especially in terms of finances. You find that you may not be able to determine how much funds you can get... They tell you these are the resources we can allow you it doesn't matter what projects you have in mind... so I would wish that there is restructuring and democratisation in the university structures so that we will be able to operate in a more friendly environment, a more open and acceptable environment. (Kristine).

Another challenge I face is that I am not able to call meetings to discuss work related to this office. It is only the deputy vice chancellor academic who calls meetings and chairs them. And sometimes he is so busy to call these meetings because he coordinates several programmes and boards. This leads to some delays in my work and the people I manage are not pleased. They blame me for the delays (Beatrice).

These women's experiences appear to suggest that managers in the public university are given a position without authority. As result, their performance relies on other people who may not take direct responsibility or blame when delays occur.

Most of the managers in the private university perceived their work environment and senior management team as very supportive. The support from the senior management team in the private university had helped the managers to cope with the challenges they faced. The private university operated an open door policy that enabled the managers to get quick access to both their senior managers and the staff they were managing. Natasha from the private university shared her experience:

When we came here there was nothing in place... When we make suggestions they take them seriously, they have purchased a lot of equipment...so they are very committed and they are determined to develop the programmes (Natasha).

Arnold from the private university who had worked in a public university made this comparison of the work environments in the two:

In the public university it was quite a difficult environment because of the administrative structure. The structure was in such a way that the person who was in charge of everything was the vice-chancellor. You could not make any decision at any level without consulting the vice-chancellor. So there were delays in making decisions...But when I came to the private university I found it slightly different....I realised that it was within my responsibility ...At least I would say I had those powers, which I did not have when I was even in a senior position at the public university... I realised that when you are given a responsibility in this university, you are given the authority to make a decision...again in the public university policies are not followed... the chief executive is the only one who makes the final decision... Here I find that the policies are respected by everybody...if it is the terms and conditions of service you follow them faithfully... it is an enabling environment for me to work in ... (Arnold).

Geoffrey from the public university confirms Arnold's views that the vice chancellor in the public university had more say in the way things are done. He compared his former vice chancellor and the current one:

The earlier one [vice chancellor] I would say there was some decisiveness. He was very decisive ...and would say yes, 'this is what we are doing, wrong or right, this is the direction' he was to some extent dictatorial...he would come to clear cut decisions very

quickly... The current one sometimes accommodates a lot of discussions... this kind of accommodation really makes people feel at ease to make a contribution and feel part and parcel of the university (Geoffrey).

The unsupportive work environment in the public university is likely to affect men and women's participation in university management differently.

Kristine explained:

... the environment is not always gender friendly... you may require some financial support, material support and physical support and you find that you are not getting it, this compounds our [women] problem because we are judged by our outputs and whereas all these are hurdles to other people ours are more compounded... we have to prove that we are capable... so when the environment is hostile, then you are not able to do that (Kristine).

The interviewees' experiences of the unsupportive work environment suggest that getting the power and authority to execute responsibilities assigned had helped the managers in the private university to perform their responsibilities with some ease. On the other hand the bureaucracy in the public university led to some delays in the performance of their work. These delays in turn led to increased workload resulting from inability to plan in good time for one's work as they are not sure when, for example, the resources or funds requested will be released. I argue that women are disadvantaged when the work environment is not supportive because they are under great scrutiny from the people they manage and they are judged more harshly if they fail to perform their responsibilities or deliver on targets.

7.6 Inadequate Support from Colleagues

Lack of support from fellow women

Some of the women and men managers interviewed also experienced the challenge of inadequate support from colleagues. Men and women experienced this challenge in gendered ways. Kristine said:

... unlike men whose support is easily available women's support is not always available. It is like many people are out to see you fail so sometimes it becomes very difficult even for those you are expecting to support you to do so. And it is not only the men who downplay your support even your fellow women, who could be doing even worse

things than men ...For example, if you have an activity where you want to delegate duties like attending conferences and things like that you find that men are more willing to support you than your fellow women. And my feeling sometimes is that you know this attitude that women are their worst enemies, it permeates everywhere ... You find that you give somebody a task and you expect them to have accomplished it by a particular period but unfortunately they don't...or even when you are being criticised you find that women are more critical of their fellow women than men. And sometimes you may find that some women may have some information which is very crucial to your performance...but they are not willing to give you that information...like now I have just received information, somebody sent me an email; they asked me 'why didn't you come to this function?', a function, which is very crucial for my work here and in this country. A colleague of mine went, she knew about it but she didn't tell me. So you see when you miss this kind of forums you go underground (Kristine).

The fact that men are more willing to attend conferences in this context than the women might be attributed to various factors. One, the men are aware of the contribution attendance at conferences makes to their academic career advancement. They are likely to present papers and publish more as a result of participating in these conferences and therefore increase their chances of promotion. Another possible reason why men in this context were available to attend conferences is that since they are not tied down by domestic responsibilities they can travel away from home at short notice and they do not need to seek permission from their spouses. Women may be aware of the benefits of attending conferences but may hold back because of their domestic responsibilities (see section 7.4).

However, Kristine thinks that women downplay each others support because:

Sometimes there is a feeling that maybe I would have been better in that position. Also feeling or also wanting like everybody else to show that you are not performing. Because probably if you come down they will get the opportunity of coming up. So there is that element which is human regardless of whether one is a woman or a man but I would want to live in society or my ideal image of society where women support one another, where women realise that they are working under very hostile environments... (Kristine).

The view that women do not support one another was supported by the informal discussions and conversations with some of the women support staff and men academics during the fieldwork. These discussions and conversations appeared to suggest that some women support staff (secretaries) and some men academics were more comfortable with having male managers rather than women. On one occasion I was sitting in the reception area waiting for one of my interviewees (a woman) who had been called to an abrupt meeting in the public university. The reception area also doubled up as the kitchen. It was around 9.00 am and the tea lady was preparing the 10 o'clock tea. Surprisingly the tea lady, the secretary and the manager in this office belonged to the same tribe (see section 6.2 for comments on tribalism). The tea lady and the secretary were talking in their mother tongue most of the time and occasionally Swahili (national language). I sat in the reception for about half an hour. My recollection of the conversation is as follows:

Secretary: Me, I will never work under that woman. If I am told to work under her I will ask for a transfer.

Tea lady: (laughs) why?

Secretary: 'If you work under her she will really give you problems
(*At this point the manager, a man, calls out the secretary's name from his office and asks her to give him a certain file. She looks for the file in the cabinet and does not find it. She thinks the file must be on the manager's desk. She goes into his office and finds it on the desk. When she comes back she continues*) This one, when he is here, you cannot do any work. He will keep on calling you and asking you for one thing or the other. (*Then the telephone rings and the person calling asks to speak to the manager, the secretary lies that he had not arrived. Upon putting the receiver down, she asked the tea lady*) Now if you are told by your boss that they do not want to see a person what do you do? (*She answered the question herself*) 'You just cheat that he has not arrived until he meets the person and they sort out their differences' (Field Notes).

I found the dishonesty and unprofessionalism in this office amazing. I was surprised that the secretary would rather work under a man in spite of his weakness of calling her all the time and telling her to do one thing or the other than work under a woman. This conversation made me wonder whether women managers were disliked probably because of their management style. So during the second and third interviews I asked some of the respondents about their experiences with men and women managers. I also asked them whether they thought that men and women managed differently. Their experiences and responses were mixed. Some of the men and women managers felt that the management styles of individuals were determined more by their personality than their gender:

I think sometimes women do not want to understand other women... I think it is not that they do not understand... it depends on the attitude one has towards other people. But... it also depends on individuals... some women are very stubborn and others are very good (Connex).

I think the management style depends on the personality and the culture one is operating in... in the African context I have only had a woman as my direct supervisor and in the United States I had both men and women and I think it is much of the issue of personality. I have worked with authoritarian people and also more relational people. And my manager [a woman] is more authoritative in the way she does things. So I am watching her manage in a way different from the one I know. I am a Christian and more interested in relationships but I also know that there are issues in this culture that may influence the way she manages. She is more direct and firm... but I am not condemning her management style (Claire).

...I do not think the difference is due to gender... I do not think managers are the same whether men or women... there is a personal difference... (Richard).

The views of these interviewees suggest that the management style of both men and women depends to a larger extent on their personality and sometimes the situation they found themselves in. Perhaps these men and women managers' views are influenced by the trait approach to leadership that posits that leaders are born not made. In this theory the personal characteristics of an individual influences their leadership or management style (see Northouse 1997 for a detailed discussion)

Some men and women however thought that women's management style was different from men's because women are more accommodative and consultative:

It is like men try to impose certain directions and sometimes I see that there are certain things about which they may be wrong but they try to push them through... I mean men are more assertive in these things and really pushing their points through. It is like you have to do it, this is my way... for the ladies... I have seen good flexibility, good understanding... They would look at issues more objectively and say, 'here is a different opinion, can we hear your side... so there is that aspect where you can easily find consensus... women are more accommodative and they have a better perspective of realities... whereas men managers will go like take the bull by the horns (Geoffrey).

I think women have a caring attitude... they look at the bigger picture... I have noted that when we are discussing disciplinary cases, men tend to be very firm and say, this student has made a mistake and he/she should be expelled... but the women would say, 'we need to find out what causes this student to behave this way... they give benefit of doubt... so women tend to be patient and look at issues from a broader perspective (Edna).

One man I had an informal conversation with in the public university seemed to hold different views from those held by Geoffrey and Edna. The man told me that he found it difficult working with women managers:

The first reason is the fact that they cannot make decisions at once. They are indecisive in their way of doing things. Another reason is that their minds tend to be fixed. Whenever they arrive at a decision it is not easy to change them. And if you try to change their mind or bring another decision they see as if you are challenging their authority or you are doing so because they are women. On the other hand men are good to work with because they make their minds quickly. I would prefer to be managed by men than women (Male academic in public university).

There is some research that has been done on women leadership styles in the UK (Al-Khalifa 1989, Adler et al 1993, Ozga 1993, Hall 1996 and Young 2004) North America (Shakeshaft 1987, Chase 1995, Regan and Brooks 1995 and Chrisler et al 1998), Australia (Blackmore 1993, 1999; Limerick and Lingard 1995 and Chesterman et al 2003) and Canada (Young 1992). This research has focused on the sameness amongst women in their ways of

leading in educational institutions. The findings from this research are summarised by Ozga (1993) who notes that:

Women's leadership styles are less hierarchal and more democratic... Women appear more flexible and sensitive...spend less time on deskwork than men...Their language is more hesitant and tentative, their agendas are more informal and flexible, and there is less distance from subordinates...Women emphasize cohesiveness. They are less individualistic and spend more time fostering an integrative culture and climate (p.11).

Some researchers in this area are reluctant to accept this popular discourse on women's management styles because they argue that it serves to essentialise women and assume that all women are the same. Blackmore (1999) argues that the popular discourse about women's leadership being "flexible, democratic, valuing, open, trustful and compassionate is seemingly convergent with new and softer management discourses that focus upon good people management" as the new source of productivity in postmodern organisations(p.57). Some recent research has tended to show that what has been considered by some to be feminine leadership styles are being used by men as well (Chesterman et al 2003 and Young 2004).

The data from this study is insufficient to draw conclusions on the management styles of the women and men interviewed. This is partly due to the fact that I was not able to observe closely most of the men and women performing management roles (see section 5.4.3). However, some of the informal discussions I had with academics in the two universities during the fieldwork and the interviews with the men and women managers appeared to suggest that the preference for men managers as opposed to women is based on gender stereotypes rather than management styles. This observation is supported by a survey carried out by Abagi et al (2000) among 833 women and 946 men in Kenya to find out the social impact of education on gender relations in the society. This survey found that a majority of the respondents (73%) would prefer having men as their managers rather than women. The study also found that conservatism increased with the level of education such that those at the higher education institutions tended to hold more traditional views about gender roles. Some of the reasons given by the

women in Abagi et al's study for not preferring women as their managers reflected gender stereotypes such as "women are too emotional, petty, difficult to cheat, easily distracted, they hate fellow women who are smarter than them, they do not forgive easily, they are quick to misinterpret one's mistake to mean disobedience and the fact that they are not efficient because they are always thinking about their children and family" (p.20).

I was surprised that these are the same reasons that were given by the secretaries and some of the men I talked to informally. Abagi et al (ibid) speculated that either woman still hold on to the traditional conservative attitudes on the status of women or they are disillusioned in a male dominated society with little opportunities for women. Evidence from this study appears to suggest that the latter is the case. Chrisler et al (1998) observe that lingering stereotypes that portray "men as good managers and women as bad managers lead to women managers receiving less recognition and cooperation from those they manage" (p. 197).

Reasons why women do not support each other

Research done elsewhere has also shown that women managers tend not to receive necessary support from their women colleagues (Gupton and Slick 1996, Morley 1997, and Mabokela 2003). Women in Mabokela's (ibid p. 137) study reported that some women were more tolerant of male power and more readily accept male authority than women's. One of the administrators in her study described this phenomenon as the "P.H.D. Syndrome" that is, the Pull Her Down" attitude. She described the attitude:

You know, we as women don't always support each other. That is a problem. If you are a successful woman, it's not like everybody will be supportive...My supervisor is having a tough time up there. She is a woman and our society is very patriarchal. You often hear people say "What's wrong with this auntie?" That is how they respond to her. They don't give her the respect and reverence that a person in a very senior position in this institution deserves (Woman manager quoted in Mabokela 2003, p. 138).

Feminist research has advanced several reasons why women do not support each other in organisations. One explanation is the token status advanced by

Kanter (1977). Kanter (ibid) argues that the few women who achieve high positions tend to feel threatened by the growth of young women in similar careers. These women therefore fail to support other women to achieve success. Kanter (ibid) identifies these women as *queen bees*. According to Kanter (ibid) the *queen bees* are strongly individualistic and tend to deny the existence of discrimination against women. They do not want to be suspected of exaggerated identification with women. They are determined to succeed on the basis of their own merit, with no hint of patronage and expect the same of other women. This behaviour by the women (queen bees) in management is likely to elicit negative responses from junior women who withdraw their support (Bagihole 1994).

Another possible explanation for the lack of support for women in management positions is the cultural construction of motherhood. This is where women are expected to continue with their care-giving and nurturing qualities even at work. When this maternal nurturance is seen not to be forthcoming, people, especially other women, get disappointed and therefore withdraw their support (Morley 1997).

Some of the women in this study were not getting support from their male colleagues as well. Natasha in the private university found building teams with her male colleagues difficult especially in collaborative research:

... the other challenge I face as an academic is... though we are encouraged to do research, team building with my colleagues is very difficult... I find them more interested in how many hours they teach (here they are paid for extra hours they teach) and earning more than to their input into research (Natasha).

Surprisingly even some men managers were having difficulties with their colleagues and they felt that they had to push them a lot in order for them to perform their responsibilities: Ronald shared his experience:

...there are certain things that must be done... some of these things are quite impromptu... you get a memo which says can we have this information now and as a manager you share some of these responsibilities... when you tell them to do certain things these people do not do them or sometimes you want something to be done quickly and you agree and then ask them the next day and they have not done it or they do not appear... (Ronald).

It is important to note that the men's inadequate support from colleagues did not result from their perceived gender roles but was due to low morale among academic staff in the public university resulting from the poor pay.

Ronald explained:

I think lecturers have tended to measure their work according to what they earn which is unfortunate because everybody tends to measure it in their own way... because of the low salaries we have been paid many people feel like the university is using them... so there is no commitment to university work...many of the lecturers have been doing their own business... So you tell somebody to do some work and they come the following day and they have not actually done it because they did not have time to do it (Ronald).

The data presented in this section suggests that women were not getting enough support from the men and sometimes female colleagues. The data also suggest that in as much as the men and women were experiencing lack of support in the performance of their management responsibilities, the women in this study were disadvantaged because the inadequate support had more to do with the fact that they were women and not their management styles.

7.7 Balancing teaching, research and management

Another challenge faced by the men and women interviewed in this study was the difficult of balancing teaching, research and management responsibilities. There has been a great deal of discussion on the relative importance attached to research and teaching in universities (Park 1992, 1996, Toren and Moore 1998, Glazer-Raymo 1999, Bell and Gordon 1999, Bagihole and White 2003, Cheek 2003 and Onsongo 2000, 2003). Some of the previous research has shown that while academics are recruited to teach, it is on the basis of research and scholarship that the universities tend to consider them for academic promotions (Park 1992, Toren and Moore 1998 and Glazer- Raymo 1999). The research done earlier has also emphasised the difficulties academics face in trying to balance teaching and research activities. Glazer- Raymo (1999) argues that evidence of the conflict between teaching and research:

... has been endemic in a system that assigns greater status and prestige to those who do research than those who teach, design curriculum and collaborate with schools (p. 70).

There is scanty information on the difficulties faced by university managers who combine teaching, research and management responsibilities. Most of the men and women interviewed in this study except the very senior managers (vice chancellor, deputy vice chancellors, and registrars in the public university) were involved in teaching, supervision of student projects and were expected to be involved in research. The vice chancellor in the private university was expected to teach at least one course and supervise student's projects in order to keep abreast with what was happening in the classroom.

Most of the women and some of the men interviewed were of the opinion that research, teaching and management responsibilities are quite distinct roles that are difficult to combine. Some of their views are summarised here:

... So actually balancing the administration and the academic growth becomes a big challenge but ... you cannot afford to ignore any aspect because for promotion to administration, that is what they are going to use to judge you... for your academic promotions, research and publications are used. So you find yourself in that catch 22 situation where you are caught between a brick wall and a hard rock... (Kristine).

Now the greatest challenge I met until then was to attend to my duties as lecturer, as a manager and at the same time do my research and publish, attend seminars... to cope with strictly academic work, academic assignments and administrative assignments because then they are two different things... (Derrick).

As an administrator... you have to take time to listen... at the same time you have to balance with the courses you are teaching. So that one has been and continues to be challenging... fulfilling the two roles and trying to do each one of them adequately... I think they are two distinct jobs to some extent. ... (Eunice).

As a result of the difficulties experienced by these men and women in combining research, teaching and management, a majority of them were concerned that their academic career, which they considered important, was not growing. One possible reason for this concern is that all the managers

interviewed except one were academics by profession. Another possible reason for the concern about academic career growth is that the management positions occupied by most of these managers were temporary. They were appointed for a period of time after which they would be expected to go back to their teaching positions within the university. Edna from the public university explained the temporary nature of her position:

I have two years before the next election... I do not know what comes after two years. But I am a teacher; even if I sit here I have a strong leg in the department. So I still have a department to go back to (Edna).

The experiences of these managers compare with those of academic managers interviewed in Henkel (2000) where some of the managers perceived these two roles (academic and manager) as being in tension. One woman dean in Henkel (Ibid) said, "it is hard to be fully engaged in both" (p.239). For some managers in Henkel, however, the issue was credibility with themselves, they did not feel that they could be managers without continuing some aspects of research that could ensure that they did not lose touch with their colleagues' experiences.

The difficulty of balancing these three roles is more likely to affect women than men because of the multiple responsibilities they have in this context. Research done elsewhere has found academic women to be at a disadvantage when they take on additional responsibilities. For example, Wallace (2003) in her interviews with seven women academic line managers (deans, and heads of schools) in one regional Australian university found that several women at head of school level had stalled their careers because of their management roles within the juggling act of a teaching and research role. All the women in her study saw themselves spread too thinly over each area and recognised that possessing higher degrees and having a robust research profile were the avenues for promotions. The women in Wallace's study saw getting time for research and completion of higher degrees as problematic.

The experiences of the women and men interviewed in this study with management, teaching and research raises questions as to whether an

academic career can be successfully combined with a management career in the university. Some of the respondents in this study were of the opinion that the two should be separated. Natasha from the private university said:

Universities should separate the academic side and the administrative side... For example, when a professor who finds himself largely an administrator also compromises his role as a researcher... that basic role for him to profess his knowledge or to do research... this is not good (Natasha).

Natasha suggested that academic positions like deans, deputy vice chancellor academic affairs should be given to academics and the other roles of management given to academics that are trained in management. There seems to be no clear cut distinction on what should constitute academic and administrative positions in this context. The fact that most managers in universities in Kenya are appointed from senior academics within the universities brings about contradictions and conflicts in balancing the roles of teaching, research and management.

7.8 Conclusion

In this chapter I have explored some of the challenges faced by the managers interviewed in this study. The narratives and experiences of the men and women suggest that both men and women in this context face a number of pressures resulting from their management, academic and personal responsibilities. Some of the pressures these women face including work overload, balancing personal and professional roles, balancing research, teaching and management and inadequate training have been reported in other feminist critical studies in North America, United Kingdom Australia, South Africa and Canada (Park 1992, 1996, Spurling 1997, De la Rey 1998, Mabokela 2003, Cheek 2003, Henkel 2003, Wallace 2003, Bagihole and White 2003, Acker and Armenti 2004. The main argument advanced by some of these feminist critical analysts is that women experience additional pressure as academics and managers in universities largely because the male career model in these institutions tends to ignore the fact that people have private lives (Wallace 2003, Currie and Thiele 2001, Bond 2003, Acker and Armenti 2004 and Tierney and Bensimon 2000). There appears to be an expectation in the universities that managers

should devote unlimited time to their professional roles in order to cope with the pressures. The male academic career model used in the universities ignores the private demands on the women's time and therefore expects the women to put in more hours in order to be able to cope with the heavy demands on a manager's time. Data from this study show that this expectation only serves to position women as outsiders within in this context because of the gendered division of labour in the domestic sphere. The multiple roles they play as academics, managers, mothers, wives and the perceptions of gender roles in the Kenyan society led these women to experience these pressures differently from the men in the study. This study shows that the management style of the institution, political interference (public university) limited resources (private university) also impose additional pressures on women managers that are specific to the Kenyan context. The next chapter examines in depth how the perceptions of gender roles by these women and men serve to position women managers as outsiders within the university.

Chapter Eight: ‘Outsiders Within’: ‘You woman, what are you doing here?’

8.1 Introduction

The women interviewed in this study experienced discrimination in various forms. Most of the women described the discrimination they experienced as subtle but the data revealed that sometimes it was very open that one woman in the study felt that some of the men’s actions were short of asking “*wee mwanamke (you woman) what are you doing here?*” This question is the main focus of this chapter. I start this chapter by defining gender discrimination within the university context before embarking on a discussion of the forms of discrimination experienced by the women managers in this study. I also discuss the effects of gender discrimination on these women. I end the chapter by presenting the data on the women and men managers’ perceptions of gender roles and the effects of these perceptions on these women’s performance as managers.

8.2 Gender discrimination against women managers

In general, the term discrimination implies that groups or people are treated differently for irrational reasons, for instance, privileging someone not on the basis of need or merit but because of their sex, race or age. Boulding (1976 cited in Kalugama 1999, p.18) identifies two types of discrimination. The first one is *good discrimination*, which refers to the “ability to exercise true judgement and to reject superficial judgement”. The second one is *bad discrimination* which refers to the “failure to make correct judgement, especially of other people”. Boulding (ibid) observes that *bad discrimination* results from three sources, that is, the desire for monopoly of power, personal prejudice and role prejudice. Boulding (ibid, p.18) notes that role prejudice is concerned with sex discrimination and it is the one often used to study discrimination against women. She defines it as “regarding persons as unfit for certain roles because of their sex and race”.

Discrimination can also be direct or indirect. Direct discrimination is illegal under the law in most countries. But indirect discrimination is more complex and difficult to prove. It involves applying a “particular requirement or condition, which places one sex at a relative disadvantage”(Tuttle 1986, p.292). According to Tuttle indirect discrimination in the example of providing separate school facilities for girls and boys is not gender discrimination, but refusing to recruit a woman or a man as a teacher in any of those schools on the grounds of sex, is direct discrimination.

Tuttle (1986) defines gender discrimination as the practice of making an unfair distinction in the treatment of an individual on the basis of their gender. In this sense one sex is privileged or restricted in comparison with the other. From a feminist perspective gender discrimination is not based on the abilities or needs of individuals, but on their stereotyped sex roles, traditions and on the benefits to men of keeping women economically oppressed (Tuttle 1986 and Kalugama 1999). Brooks (1995) observes that gender discrimination in universities takes both direct and indirect forms including: subjective selection procedures, assumptions based on stereotyped models of the character and suitability of women, personal contacts and old boys networks, age barriers, and excessive mobility requirements with posts. Following Tuttle (1986) and Brooks (1995) gender discrimination is used in this study to refer to the treatment of women managers differently from men because of the prevailing stereotyped sex roles and the traditional attitudes towards women in leadership positions in the Kenyan society.

Reasons for gender discrimination against women in universities

Feminist researchers have identified two main possible reasons for gender discrimination in the universities. The first reason is unequal power relations. Men tend to hold more power in the academy than women (Morley 1997, 1999, Brooks 1995, 1997 and Kalugama 1999). According to Kalugama (1999, p. 34) unequal power relations in the academy is displayed in three different ways. One, women are excluded from powerful positions.

Two, women are excluded from the decision and policy-making process because they occupy junior positions within the hierarchy. Three, women managers do not get adequate support from their colleagues (men and women) because they are reluctant to believe that women can be competent managers.

The second possible reason why women experience gender discrimination in universities is the traditional beliefs about gender roles. Kalugama (1999) observes that:

...negative attitudes dominant within the patriarchal system give rise to unfavourable impressions and to an under valuation of women's skills and abilities which results in the exclusion of women from management and higher status positions (p 39).

Kalugama (ibid) argues that the traditional myths and gender stereotypes lead to the assumption or belief that decision making is a male domain and women are incapable of making or taking firm "decisions". When these myths are extended to organisations some men and women occupying junior positions do not like to see women holding decision making positions. Packer (1995) and Walker (1997) observe that although it is now illegal in some countries for institutions to openly discriminate against women on the basis of sex, many of these old attitudes, that women are not capable or welcome in academia, have remained. In this section I present the experiences of the men and women interviewed on gender discrimination.

Most of the women interviewed observed that they had not experienced direct gender discrimination in the course of their academic and management careers. Some of their comments on gender discrimination include:

No I wouldn't say so... because at least as far as our university is concerned, for example, if you apply for promotion or something there is a criterion ...I don't believe that there is real outright discrimination, there isn't that in this university... So I think in this university, your hard work... it is what you do that pays... (Beatrice).

You see at the university level, you get promotion depending on your academic qualification and how much you have published (Natasha).

There should be no problem as far as I am concerned... if we go this direction we are going to have men as the endangered species... This is something [gender discrimination] of women's making because they are kind of promoting this... I believe there is no gender discrimination... that is why I am not concerned about it... because gender discrimination is only magnified by women (Geoffrey).

The comments by these interviewees appear to suggest that there is no gender discrimination at their universities. There are several reasons for these women and men managers' denial of gender discrimination. I examine some of them in the next section.

Reasons for denying gender discrimination

Brooks (1995) observes that the issue of gender discrimination in universities is sometimes difficult to point out because academic institutions frequently see themselves as gender neutral and strongly defend the criterion of academic merit used in the selection, recruitment and promotion as being free from discrimination. It is possible that some of the men and women interviewed in this study believe that merit is used to recruit, appoint and promote people in their universities. This could be one of the reasons why they deny that there is gender discrimination in their universities (see Beatrice and Natasha's comment on p.208)

Another possible reason why some of the women in these interviews had not experienced gender discrimination is that they were not sensitive to their being women in management positions. Eunice said:

...when I am working I do not think I am working as a woman (can you say more?)... you would imagine that probably when something happens to you if you are over conscious of being a woman, the first thing you would think is that this is happening because I am a woman. So I am trying to say that, that one does not strike me... when I am in a difficult situation and something hinders me, I think I just do my work not thinking really about gender issues... I just approach issues as a manager or as a leader in whatever capacity I am given... So it is not at the forefront of my mind that I am a female in this position ... I tend to think that if I approach work with that in mind, it will impact on my reaction to things. You see you become oversensitive and you imagine that somebody is treating you that way because of your sex (Eunice).

Research done elsewhere shows that some women managers tend to ignore the fact that they are women occupying management positions (Ferguson 1984, Marshall 1986, Davies 1995 and De la Rey 1998). Marshall (1986, p.205) in her study of women managers in organisations in the United States discovered that half of the female managers she interviewed said that they did not make a point of being female as they worked to be treated as “people” rather than as women. The women in Marshall’s (ibid) study were concerned that their balanced “perspective” on work issues would be disturbed if they identified themselves as women. This perception appears to be similar to the one Eunice in this study had. Davies (1995) notes that most women managers in organisations ignore the fact that they are different from, and act as equal with, men in order to fit in the masculine culture.

It is also possible that some of the women’s and men’s denial of gender discrimination may be due to the assumption or belief that the traditional gender roles are biologically determined and therefore cannot be challenged or changed (see section 8.3). Therefore even when one is treated differently because of their sex, they are unlikely to consider the treatment as gender discrimination (Durrani 2001).

Another possibility for denying gender discrimination is that some of the women have not experienced gender discrimination in their families as they grew up. Eunice said:

... in my family we were all brought up the same...I have only two brothers and I am the only girl...So I have seen or read that some parents do not let their girls go to school or that girls are treated badly, because I did not grow up in similar circumstances, I really do not know what it entails...It just looks normal that everybody should go to school and that everybody should be treated the same (Eunice).

It is also possible that some of the women may be lacking in gender awareness and consciousness. This is revealed by Edna’s comments when she says:

I see things are not working and I do not see the reason. And then somebody tells me that don't you know that those are men you are dealing with. I didn't look at it from that perspective (Edna).

For example Eunice from the private university thought that because her department was initially dominated by women and later had an equal number of men and women, there was no gender discrimination. In other words she thought of gender discrimination in terms of the number of men and women:

No not so far. But as I said if you looked at the structure of our department at the time I came.. the head was male and the other member of staff was female, I was female... in fact for a while the department was dominated by females... in fact now there are three women and three men. So gender discrimination is not there... (Eunice).

However, some of the women were reluctant to advocate for gender sensitisation among women as a way of increasing gender awareness because they thought it might prove counterproductive. Edna said:

... it may be important to sensitise but it must be done carefully because it is [gender discrimination] almost part and parcel of our day to day lives and if we focus on it too much it could be counterproductive (Edna).

The views expressed by Edna here seem to suggest that these women have accepted gender discrimination as part of the academic discourse and social interaction in this context hence there is no need of thinking about it. It also suggests that some of the women in this context have been socialised to receiving different treatment from men such that they have internalised their 'other' status hence they are unlikely to detect or call any behaviour towards them because of their gender as discrimination. Henley and Freeman (1989) quoted by Crawford and Unger 2000, p. 78) observe that:

By continually being reminded of their inferior status in their interactions with others, and continually compelled to acknowledge that status in their own patterns of behaviour, women may internalise society's definition of them as inferior so thoroughly that they are often unaware of what their status is. Inferiority becomes habitual, and the inferior place assumes the familiarity-and even desirability-of home (Henley and Freeman 1989, p. 457).

Kristine explained the effect of socialisation on women's participation in management positions in the Kenyan society:

The socialisation is that many of us have come from backgrounds, which do not prepare us for leadership positions. So sometimes we are not equipped in terms of what it takes to be a manager or to be a leader... whereas boys grow up being told that you are supposed to stand, you are supposed to perform... women are not... So when you grow up and you reach a point where you are supposed to be a manager, it is like there is a personality clash between what you have been socialised to do and what society expects you to do... that is why... when women get into leadership positions they tend to behave more like men than women because now they think for you to be a leader, you must be a man (Kristine).

There is also a possibility that some of the women in these interviews may be suffering from false consciousness. This is a concept borrowed from Marxism and often used by Marxist feminists to refer to women who deny gender discrimination. In Marxism, false consciousness is the hypothesis that material and institutional processes in a capitalist society mislead the proletariat and perhaps the other classes over the nature of capitalism. In this concept, people experience social relationships as value relations between things, for example the material benefits they get (good salary) and what they want to achieve (be good academics or managers). According to the Marxists, false consciousness is brought about by the fact that ideas that reflect the interests of a particular class of people at a particular time in history, are presented as universal and eternal while such ideas may not represent the interests of the subordinate class or group and may be false. The subordinate group also come to hold these ideas as true even if they are oppressive to them.

False consciousness applied to the women in this study implies that they are alienated from the male cultural values that determine how they can be incorporated into the university culture. The alienation may be attributed to the fact that these women occupy management positions (status/ achievement) and earn a good salary (material gain) compared to other women in the society. They are also concerned about developing their

academic careers and achieving good results in their teaching and management responsibilities. Therefore, they are not likely to perceive their relationships with men in their context as discriminatory since they do not associate what goes on in the university as being influenced by male “standards, priorities and practices”(Brooks 1997, p.125). Brook (ibid) observes that this is the reason why academic women do not interpret some of the actions that depict gender discrimination in this sense.

Another possible reason for denial of gender discrimination is the fact that some of the women had perceived their appointments as coming from God hence they interpreted most of their experiences as God’s will for them. Moreover, their perception of gender relations may have been influenced by the Christian teaching that men and women are equal before God or that men are superior to women depending on their interpretation of the Christian teachings (See sections on submission and equality in 9.2.6).

However, other evidence from the study suggests that the most probable reason for denial of gender discrimination by some of these women appeared to be the subtle nature in which it was experienced. Brooks (1997, p.125) observes that women academics sometimes have difficulty in assessing whether they have experienced discrimination because of the often covert nature of discriminatory practices. In her survey of 200 women academics in 20 universities in the UK and 30 in depth interviews with academic women in two universities in New Zealand, Brooks found that the academic women felt that discriminatory practices were difficult to define. Hence the women in her study were reluctant to describe their own experience as discriminatory.

Walker (1997,) identifies subtle discrimination in universities as the

...intangibles, the clubbiness that reinforces a feeling that men belong and women do not, that women disturb the rhythm somehow in a department which has been all male in the past (p.51).

This culture, Walker argues, is embedded in whom is consulted, who is talked to over tea, who gets to help draw up agendas for departmental

meetings and funding proposals, who gets to recommend people for posts and who is invited or encouraged to apply for positions. The subtle nature of the discrimination may be attributed to global campaigns on gender equity.

Packer (1995) identifies two main forms of subtle discrimination in universities. These are unfair treatment in the form of unwritten rules that bar women's future options and a hostile environment. One woman in this study identified subtle discrimination as the main challenge she was facing and defined it as:

I will call it subtle because the person is not justified to do what they are doing and at the same time they do not want to come out directly and say, '*wee mwanamke* (you woman) what are you doing here?' (Edna).

I now explore some of the experiences of discrimination by the women interviewed.

8.2.1 Women Manager's Experiences of Discrimination

Undervaluing of women's research

The discrimination experienced by some of the women in this study took various forms. For some women it was their research or projects on women issues that were not considered as real scientific research by their male colleagues. Beatrice from the public university shared her experience:

But I have to admit... I also got involved in projects about women ... I would hear my male colleagues make some funny remarks. Some would say... 'now what are you doing, why don't you get into real science research? What kind of work are you doing here? And the point really was not that I was not doing my science research, I really was... (Beatrice).

The remarks made by Beatrice's male colleagues appear to suggest that they did not consider research or projects on women's issues as real science research. These remarks can also be interpreted to mean that these men have the power to determine what constitutes real science research. It also appears that the men have the power to question Beatrice's research because she is a woman regardless of the topic of the research. As a result of these remarks

Beatrice felt that she had to explain herself. In her explanation Beatrice implies that she was involved in the women's projects not as part of her real science research but as a part time job or a hobby, which may not count, towards her promotion. The remarks from the male colleagues also show how reluctant some men in this context are to enhance the participation of women in higher education through involvement in projects related to women.

Previous feminist critical analysis has shown that involvement in research projects related to women's issues is not considered as part of mainstream research in universities (Aisenberg and Harrington 1988, Park 1996, Packer 1995, Morley 1999, Kent and Palmer 1999, Hatt 1999, Bell and Gordon 1999, Fashina 2000 and Tamale and Oloka-Onyango 2000). Fashina (2000) in her research on female academics in Nigerian universities found that research on women's issues was not considered as "serious" research by male colleagues. Fashina (ibid) cites the case of a "concerned male" colleague advising a female colleague who had just been promoted to a senior lectureship based mainly on the research she had done on women's issues to "now work hard at more serious issues and forget about all those things about women" for her subsequent promotion (p.123). Men academics in Fashina's study were also found to be negative about workshops and seminars on gender issues organised on campus. They dismissed them as "women's nonsense going on up there" (p.122). The undervaluing of research or projects related to woman in the universities raises questions regarding the achievement of gender equality in the Kenyan society. For example, how can women's participation in higher education and in university management be enhanced if there is no research done to identify the barriers or obstacles women face in this context?

Lack of recognition from men

For other women subtle discrimination took the form of open hostility and lack of cooperation from male colleagues who were junior to them. Edna gave this example:

I went to some meeting and there was one particular fellow who was very hostile. I was in the leadership and this fellow was extremely hostile and I could not understand why. And I got an older man to tell him that I am feeling very uncomfortable and I am not quite sure, I said to him, 'this is your friend, would you tell me, maybe what I have done that is causing this?' He told me that 'ain't you aware that this is an African man who would rather be the one in the leadership than you are?' I told him 'I didn't even ask for this, yeah I didn't, you know there are things you can lobby for, and why could it make him uncomfortable?' I said no. He said no, 'you know African men we don't want to be that we are the ones following. We don't want that' (Edna).

There was fear on the part of Edna to confront the man and ask him what the problem was. I enquired from Edna why she did not approach the man herself. She said:

He was very hostile. I don't think he would have given me an audience. So I thought the best way could be to go through somebody else. I would have preferred to approach him myself but he was so hostile ... I did not want to leave the meeting with that kind of bitterness... I met him in the presence of this other man... from our discussion I realised that he was imagining that by me being in the leadership I was sidelining him. I was sitting on him and I was not making him as conspicuous as he should be. I was able to explain why certain things were done the way they were done in the meeting (Edna).

Edna's experience appears to suggest that the man was aware that it is wrong to discriminate against her openly. So he did it indirectly to avoid a formal complaint being lodged against him. Again, Edna like Beatrice, had to explain why she was leading the meeting the way she was doing to the man resisting her leadership. Edna's experience also suggests that even if legislation and policies forbidding gender discrimination are put in place in

this context, they are not likely to achieve much if people do not change their attitudes towards women in management positions.

For other women in this study the discrimination took the form of lack of recognition of their seniority by the men they were working with. Sofia from the public university narrated her experience:

I had a male boss whom we could not agree at all. He would belittle me; shout at me even when the students are there. This is a man who never recognised my title, I am a doctor (PhD) and a senior lecturer we were at the same academic rank at that time, he was later promoted to associate professor but at that point we were the same, only that I was his deputy... But he would throw words at me and call me by my first name [note it is considered rude or disrespectful to call people especially those who hold senior positions to you by their first names in this context], 'So and so come here' and in that meeting we are with other junior people and the students are there. He would tell me, if I wanted to say something, he would say, 'no no not you keep quiet'. As a person he knew me only as a woman and not his deputy, no never never... well with my current boss, let me say, there is a bit of respect. And even when it is done it is not very open. But in the long analysis you see it. For example, when he is grouping people in the department he will always group me together with the secretary who is very very junior. The secretary again finds it very very hard to take instructions from me because after all we are the same ...But again you find you go to an office where sometimes you give ideas or you make suggestions but somebody refuses to see that suggestion because it is coming from you and it is not always implemented immediately. After some time when it is seen that it will work, now you find somebody taking it up and owning it. Somebody does not want to give credit to you directly and since you are the one who came up with that suggestion. That is one of the things that I have seen and it actually frustrates me ...and that is why I actually left my former office (Sofia).

Sofia's experience suggests that as a woman in management, the men managers she works with construct her identity in contradictory ways. As a manager and senior academic staff, Sofia is entitled to some respect and authority. On the other hand, because of her sex and perceived gender role, Sofia is constructed just as a woman, who is supposed to keep quiet and listen to the men managers with whom she works. This construction of Sofia's identity by the man manager appears to confirm Tamale and Oloka-Onyango (2000) observation that women academics and managers in universities in Africa when relating to their male colleagues are generally perceived through "lenses tainted by their sexuality" (p.11). This

construction of Sofia's identity presents contradictions for her and other women support staff. For example, the secretary regards Sofia as just a woman like her and therefore finds it hard to take instructions from her. Sofia's management responsibility and academic status are ignored in this construction of her identity. Sofia's experience shows how unequal power relations resulting from gender stereotypes in the university serve to position women as the *other sex* or as *outsiders*.

Fault finding

The women in this study also experienced discrimination in the form of some junior male colleagues seeking to find fault in the woman manager by ignoring to do their professional responsibilities. Natasha shared her experience:

You know in this institution you have heard of this thing offices are open. So a simple thing [mistake], instead of them [men colleagues] coming to me, you will find they have gone to my manager... You know when a chance arises where they will see that it is me at fault, they would rather do that... to make it appear that the problem is with me... even things which they can attend to and they know it is their professional responsibility... they wait until I remind them, such that if I do not remind them they will say, 'she did not remind us'. They are always looking for faults in me or seeking to make me appear to be in the wrong by neglecting to perform their duties properly (Natasha).

Most of the experiences of discrimination by these women are perhaps due to the socio-cultural expectations of women in the African context. Mabokela (2003) basing her argument on her research on the experiences of women managers in South African higher education institutions concludes that socio-cultural expectations play an important role in gender discrimination against women. One woman manager in Mabokela (2003) describes the impact of these socio-cultural expectations on her performance:

Culture plays a major role. This is a patriarchal society. Women should not be in these positions. I should be at home, not in the decision making position. This mindset needs to change. There is this attitude that "a woman can't tell us what to do". They truly have a problem with the fact that I occupy a top-notch position here (Woman manager quoted in Mabokela 2003, p.142).

Sexual harassment

Gender discrimination for some women in this study took the form of sexual harassment. The experience of Sofia with her PhD supervisor (see section 6.2) shows how sexual harassment was used in this context to delay her academic career advancement within the university. Sofia's experience shows how a powerful man in the university used his position to frustrate her. The fact that there are no policies or procedures in place on sexual harassment and the fact that the offender is very senior in the university made Sofia to suffer in silence. Although it was only Sofia who openly shared her experience of sexual harassment, other women in this study alluded to the fact that it was something that affects women's participation in university management in this context. Informal discussions with some men in the public and private university during the field interviews suggested that there was a general belief among some men that women are appointed to positions of management because they have sexual relationships with powerful men. Edna from the public university observed that such allegations were very common in her institution and that it was likely that most women were discouraged from taking up senior management positions because of this. Eunice from the private university also thought that sexual harassment was one of the reasons why there are few women occupying management positions in Kenyan universities. She said:

May be this one falls under stereotypes but I will emphasis it. You see the way men view women sometimes you may be well qualified, may be even the best qualified in the organisation and you would want to be at the top but men will always want sexual favours and you know for a woman you will have to decide will I or won't I. It is kind of tied with stereotypes but it has been a very limiting factor (Eunice).

Sexual harassment has been identified by feminists as the most common form of sex discrimination experienced by women in universities that is rarely acknowledged and reported (Farley 1978, MacKinnon 1979, Brooks and Perot 1991, Paludi 1992, Brooks 1995, Cairns 1997, Omale 2000, Tamale and Oloka-Onyango 2000, Hagedorn 2000 and Durrani 2001). Farley (1978) defines sexual harassment as:

unsolicited, non-reciprocal male behaviour that asserts a woman's sex role over her function as a worker. It can be any or all of the following, starting at commenting upon or touching a woman's body parts, repeating non reciprocated propositions for dates, demands for sexual intercourse and rape (p.68).

Paludi (1992) notes that sexual harassment is often experienced from people occupying more senior positions than the victim and results from opportunities presented by power and authority created by the hierarchical structure of organisations. In most cases the harasser is an individual who holds expert and informational power in an academic setting or work place. The power can be in the form of grades, letters of recommendation and promotions (Paludi, *ibid*). In Sofia's experience in this study the harasser had the power, expertise and ability to determine her promotion and teaching load.

As a form of control over women MacKinnon (1979) argues that sexual harassment sustains male dominance and women's subordination by privileging the sexual desires of men over the needs of women. And as a form of sex discrimination MacKinnon (*ibid*) continues to argue that sexual harassment blocks women's achievement of equality with men by supporting the institutionalisation of gender inequality in all its forms. This is because many women who are not strong and determined have no other choice but to handle their sexual harassment problems by quitting or changing jobs. It becomes a significant factor in women's job turnover and slower career advancement. For example, it took Sofia in this study ten years before she completed her PhD and before she was promoted to the next academic rank.

Durrani (2001, p.22) identifies two popular myths about sexual harassment that make its reality in universities and other organisations obscured. The first myth is that "women enjoy it". The second is that "it is trivial and unimportant and happens to types of women who seek attention from men and whose moral conduct is often questionable". These myths according to Durrani (*ibid*) make women to be held responsible for provoking men and are often blamed for any harassing acts by men towards them. The myths

associated with sexual harassment in society lead to the assumptions that it is therefore not a problem affecting all women and can be handled by women if it happens at all (Durrani 2001). It is possible that these myths about sexual harassment may have contributed to the absence of policies on sexual harassment in most institutions in Kenya and its prevalence. A survey done by Omale (2000) in Kenyan public universities found that sexual harassment was a major limiting factor in women's participation in higher education both as students and staff. Omale observed that it appeared that most women in the universities felt that they must put up with sexual harassment if they wanted "to get a job, keep a job or be considered for promotion" (p. 33). Omale attributed this to the fact that the women lacked sufficient strength of numbers or institutional power to challenge male abuse of power. Elsewhere Tamale and Oloka-Onyango (2000) writing about the prevalence of sexual harassment in African universities argue that the vice is perpetuated by a "conspiracy of silence" and a dearth of sufficient mechanisms within universities designed to address the problem. The lack of mechanisms to address the problem Tamale and Oloka-Onyango (ibid) argue leads to most cases of sexual harassment and gender based violence remaining unreported for fear of being "labelled or otherwise victimised" (p.15)

Some of the experiences of the women on gender discrimination appear to be very hostile and quite open. However, most of the women interviewed did not perceive them as gender discrimination at first because, as Walker (1995) observes, they comprise the unwritten rules and the hostile work environment in the university that serve to position women as outsiders within. The affected women in this context are not able to lodge a formal complaint against the offenders partly because there are no policies in place and the fact that some of the behaviours targeted at the women are difficult to define as discriminatory. In most cases the affected women interpreted these behaviours as personal and this probably explains the coping strategies adopted. In the next section I examine some of the effects of discrimination on the women.

8.2.2 Effects of discrimination on women managers

The subtle discrimination experienced by the women in this study had various effects on the performance of their management responsibilities and their personalities as individuals. The effects were shown by their reaction to the incidents that were perceived as discriminatory. For most of the women there was a sense of guilt provoked by their experiences. The remarks from her male colleagues served to raise feelings of guilt and doubt in Beatrice about the work she was doing:

And as I was doing these projects there are times once or twice I asked myself, am I really doing the *right thing* [my emphasis] in involving myself in this project? Because I had some remarks which provoked this thought... I think those were some of the issues initially that made me think 'ooh my goodness, what are other people thinking I am doing' (Beatrice)

Beatrice's comments about the effects of the remarks by her male colleagues suggest that she cannot be confident to talk about her projects related to women's issues to an interview panel for promotion, which in most cases comprise men. Again it is likely that if the male colleagues making these remarks happen to sit in an interview panel or an appraisal committee for promotions, Beatrice is unlikely to be promoted to the next grade on account of these projects.

Edna responded to the discrimination she experienced by trying to seek fault in herself and feeling guilt. She wondered what she had done to elicit such hostility from the man resisting her leadership. The hostility from the man towards Edna caused a lot of discomfort. She could not proceed with the meeting until she got an explanation. It made Edna feel apologetic about the position she was holding. She said '*I didn't ask for this position*'. This expression can be interpreted to mean that Edna thought that she did not deserve the position.

There is also a sense of self-blame in these women who experience discrimination. Natasha when talking about the behaviour from her junior male colleagues wonders whether their behaviour is being caused by her

management style. She said; 'maybe I am too strict... but you see I have to follow the policies'.

The discrimination also isolates the women from the academic community. Natasha said:

... as a woman I experience difficulties dealing with my junior male colleagues. This is more so in this area where we have few women and then you are the only woman among a number of men who meet in places, you know they go for a drink and you cannot fit in such a scenario and it is like you are alone and among your staff you do not have friends (Natasha).

The sexual harassment and the accompanying hostility experienced by Sofia made her suffer from stress and frustration. When Sofia refused to respond to her supervisor's sexual advances she was penalised by him in other ways. She also felt helpless and hopeless as a woman in the face of a very powerful man:

He became very very hostile ... any time I could go to his office for supervision he could close his door and start telling me anything, frustrating me, abusing me, telling me that I was imagining that I was the best girl he had ever seen ... He used a certain group of people in the university to frustrate me. Frustration in the sense that you reach a position, you are senior but no one recognises that seniority. You are not given students to supervise; you are given the highest workload. There was a time I was the only person in the department teaching the largest number of classes day in day out. So that you do not have time for your studies or for yourself (Sofia).

Sofia's experiences shows that her sexuality is used by the man manager to determine the extent of her participation in the university as an academic. Some of the effects of sexual harassment that have been identified in the literature include, at the personal level, that it can be a very stressing experience leading to intense anger, frustration and even depression (Laughlin and Bischoff 2001, Gerdes 2003 and Durrani 2001). Durrani (2001) notes that the strategies that women employ to control their anger such as escape and avoidance leads to social isolation, which in turn exacerbates further the feeling of helplessness and hopelessness. It can also be a major health hazard for women at work because of the stress that is generated which may be accompanied by symptoms such as headaches and

nausea. Sexual harassment can also lead to difficulties in family and social relationships and increase the chances of mental breakdown because the emotional and physical distress of the victim lingers on for a very long time (Durrani 2001). To be fired or demoted for confronting or complaining about harassment or being silent about the painful experience can be traumatic. Being disbelieved by the authorities, colleagues and friends adds a significant amount of pain to an already torturing situation. The women who experience harassment often suffer loss of self-dignity accompanied by loss of self confidence and confidence in others especially men (Durrani 2001, MacKinnon 1979 and Cairns 1997).

At the professional level sexual harassment can result in dissatisfaction with one's job. The productivity level of harassed women is likely to drop and they are likely to start suffering from serious self-doubts about their abilities. Some harassed women may quit their jobs, even if they cannot afford to do so. Those who stay may feel uncomfortable and their concentration on the job affected adversely (Anila 1998). It can also lead to denial of promotion opportunities (Durrani 2001). The experience of Sofia was characterised by delayed promotion and excessive workload after or as part of the sexual harassment.

Coping strategies for gender discrimination

Feminist research on how women cope with gender discrimination in universities has identified two main coping strategies. The first strategy adopted by women is keeping silent or ignoring the situation. The possible reason why women adopt this strategy is that there are no support systems in place in most institutions and no laws on campus identifying the procedures to be followed. Even where support systems and laws exist women are often doubtful of the confidentiality of the system especially in relation to sexual harassment (Folkman and Lazarus 1985, Cairns 1997, Durrani 2001, Brooks and Perot 1991). Cairns (1997) drawing on feminist psychological theories of development suggests that women's silence as a reaction to sexual harassment may be attributed to three factors. One, women are

psychologically disempowered by a fragmented self resulting from the patriarchal socialisation of women as 'others' to the male norm. Second, women have accommodated themselves to male defined norms of femininity and developed very limited sense of self. As a result of these two processes Cairns (ibid) argues that women may believe that their experiences of sexual harassment are not real. Lastly, it would be possible that silence about sexual harassment on the part of women is used as a form of resistance, a way of holding back and refusing to participate.

The second coping strategy adopted by women is self blame, that is, taking personal responsibility for causing or contributing to the discrimination they experience. In this strategy, women describe their experiences of discrimination as *my fault* or *my responsibility* or *I asked for it* (Cairns 1997, Lott and Rocchio 1998 and Durrani 2001). In relation to sexual harassment women tend to justify men's behaviour towards them with reasons such as "he was being friendly", "men are usually like this", "I provoked him", "I was wearing the wrong clothes" and "I was in the wrong place at the wrong time" (Durrani ibid, p.40). Durrani (ibid) argues that women assimilate such justifications for men's behaviour until they themselves start believing in them, finally coming to the point where they believe that men are allowed to behave in this manner.

The experiences of the women in this study on discrimination seem to position women as outsiders within the universities they work in. They experience discrimination that is covert, some of which is a result of the men's perceptions of the women's traditional gender roles and men's desire to maintain monopoly in running the institutions. A feminist critical analysis of these women's experiences has revealed that men in this context consider themselves as insiders who have the power to determine the level of women's participation in university management. The discrimination against women in this context is perpetuated by the fact that there are no policies on campus and in the country (see section 2.2.4) geared towards protecting employees against sex discrimination and sexual harassment (Omale 2000). The next section shows how the women are positioned further as outsiders

by their perception and the men's perceptions of gender roles in the Kenyan society.

8.3 Perceptions of gender roles

Women's perceptions of gender roles

Hall (1996) observes that where women have been successful in reaching the top, their perceptions of the expectation of them as women leaders influence their behaviour. Data from this study suggests that the division of labour along traditional lines greatly influenced the men and women's perceptions of their gender roles. The expectation that women in this society should get married at an early age and bring up a family by doing all the childrearing and domestic responsibilities determine how some of the women plan and go about performing their academic and management responsibilities. Beatrice from the public university shared her perceptions:

...ooh right now I am a young mother you know, so my child is quite small, I see some applications that come that require one to go away for two or three months, I have to think twice about that. I am not sure that I am ready to leave my child for that long period. I think before I got married I would make those kinds of applications and make those decisions very easily. Because my child is very small right now there are certain applications I will not make... any short visits, two weeks, one week those sorts of things I will take but anything that involves long periods of being away and leaving the child at this point I have decided like my sort of priority is to give this child an opportunity (Beatrice).

Beatrice's role as a young mother also involves 'dashing home at lunchtime and periodically to check on her baby'. Edna from the same university shared similar perceptions as Beatrice and had planned her career around her gender role as a woman and a mother:

... When I joined the department, there were opportunities to go and study outside and I had a young family and I opted to study here and be with them... I had to stay with them. ... I had that obligation and well I think it was a choice to make but I don't think I would have looked at it in any other way... I have had a few offers or interests of jobs elsewhere outside the country, within the country and other institutions but I have opted to stay here because I feel the time is not yet ready for me to go elsewhere (Edna).

This perception appears to suggest how strongly Edna feels about her gender role. She considers her gender role as a mother and wife as an obligation and there is a limited way in which she can look at it. Again in terms of taking up other job opportunities, Edna has turned down offers probably because of her responsibilities to her family.

Eunice, a single woman from the private university perceived the traditional gender roles of women as static and not likely to change in the near future:

Women are the primary care givers that is a role that cannot be easily usurped. So the challenge I believe for many women has been a choice between, 'is it going to be career, will I go to rise to the top and be the managing director or am I going to raise my kids. And I think when it comes to children it is an emotional issue; there is no competition (Eunice).

These women's perception of their gender roles was also revealed by the way they organised their offices as compared to men. The women's offices seemed to be neatly arranged with some flowers or plants on their table. For example, Edna made this observation about the arrangement of her office:

You know I came here; I came with this plant of mine, which I had in another office and I came with that flower. And then people come here and say, 'ooh this office looks different' I say, 'no it doesn't, look all these things are piling here.' They say, 'no women make the office look homely (Edna).

The comments made by the people who came to Edna's office suggest the social expectations of women by the society 'making the offices homely'. The perceptions of these women appear to suggest that they are likely to turn down offers for management responsibilities that will require them to travel away from home for long periods. Again these women's careers are likely to advance more slowly than men's due the limited exposure on the part of women who miss out on the career development opportunities offered outside the country and far from their homes.

These women's perceptions analysed from an African feminist perspective (see section 4.3.3) reflect the dual nature of African women's roles. In the African context, child bearing and rearing is considered a primary

responsibility for women and their status as women depends on this role. In addition to this primary responsibility women are expected to contribute to the economic welfare of their families (Fashina 2000 and Tamale and Oloka-Onyango 2000). Tamale and Oloka-Onyango (2000) observe that women academics in Africa carry a dual burden because they “ must pursue both their academic interests while meeting traditional obligations of childbearing and rearing, cooking and domestic household chores or their supervision” (p.5)

However, from a feminist critical policy analysis perspective these women’s perceptions of their gender role are likely to affect their career advancement especially in terms of pursuing further training to increase their promotion opportunities or rising to senior management. This is because the university’s appointment and promotion policies do not take into consideration the women’s traditional gender role when promoting and appointing academic and administrative staff. Again, there are no structural support systems such as day care centres in the universities to support women’s dual roles. For example, these women’s academic and management careers seemed to have developed more slowly compared to the men partly because their gender roles did not allow them to go abroad for further studies (see section 6.2). Again the data from this study revealed that some of the men in the public university had been able to advance their career and gain management skills by travelling within and outside the country where most of these courses were offered. (Note that because of inadequate material and human resources, brain drain and the politics in Kenyan’s university education, most higher education degrees and training are still obtained abroad). Some of the men shared their experiences:

...I travelled to the United States for my post-doctoral I won a fellowship and every time I have travelled...’ Again part of my job involves travelling, for example in August 2003; I had to travel to all universities in Kenya and also went to Uganda (Albert).

So I came back to the university in 1994 and joined the department and worked up to 1997 when I went overseas for a re-invitation because the Scholarship that I held for my PhD has a very good follow up

programme... I am eligible for a re-invitation every three years for three months to further my research work (Gordon).

However, some women like Natasha from the private university, who is a single widowed woman, thought that it was no longer possible to continue with the traditional gender roles in the modern Kenyan society.

In the modern society you see it is not easy to have the gender roles so specific. If you take my example, here I am, a mother, the breadwinner, almost everything to my family. Now if I was just to sit down and say now I cannot do this or that or I can't own property because I am a woman... it limits and on the other hand if men believe that a woman cannot be a truck driver because she is weak and so on it may really limit the potential of people... (Natasha).

Natasha's views reflect what would be considered a more pragmatic view of gender roles in the modern Kenyan society. However, very few people perceive gender roles in the way she does. Again, Natasha admits elsewhere in this thesis that it is because she is single that she enjoys more freedom and time to devote more time to her career (see section 7.4).

Men's perceptions of gender roles

Some of the men's perceptions of gender roles are similar in some aspects to those held by some of the women but they appear to be more conservative and contradictory especially for career women. Geoffrey from the public university was of the view that women should revert to their traditional roles as home keepers and care givers:

I think the modern society is more destructive of the traditional gender roles. I would like a situation where the traditional roles are upheld or enhanced...is like today women no longer are in that position where she waits or rather she knows that hers is the household...it is like you are graduate I am a graduate I can actually be independent... so slight differences can crop and they claim independence saying I can do without you. And there is a tendency of what I can see as bringing rifts between children and parents because the woman's role is now perceived differently...and perhaps also the stress that is caused by the demands on the modern woman...I fear for the future... the kind of children we are bringing up ... when you want to get a role model or a woman who can really now instruct them in some aspects you have nobody to send them to all the grandmothers are gone....There are role conflicts...if it were possible in future we should have an opportunity of seeking to have women at home...Because I have seen certain

homes where that kind of thinking [gender equality] has resulted in break ups... Like you remember even these women coming up for leadership positions at the national level, some are arguing that they are being given what they deserve... and it is like when they go home... their husbands are going to put them off because they have not achieved what they went to discuss.. they are losing time for their families, so they lose out **so you start wondering what is it that these women really want** (Says this with a lot of emphasis). Out there they have to see that their role is really different from their role in the home. I would look at women as really home keepers. They may have other priorities but the home should come first. Their work should come second... (Geoffrey).

The views expressed by Geoffrey suggest that some men prefer the traditional gender roles because they make women subordinate to men whereas women's participation in careers is likely to give them more independence that threatens men's power and control over women. Sofia from the public university observed that not many men in this context were happy with their wives holding management positions:

Not many men want to hear that their wives are managers...like me... when I was appointed to this position my husband did not take it positively. But I told him I was determined to take the position and I assured him that nothing was going to change at home because I do not carry this position with me home (Sofia).

Geoffrey's views are more traditional in that he thinks women should be relegated back to the domestic sphere. Surprisingly his views appear to represent the perceptions of a majority of the men I talked to informally. Informal discussions with other senior men in some of the seminars I attended and at my place of work seem to support Geoffrey's views. An informal conversation with a senior male manager in the private university lasting half an hour revealed how some men were in favour of traditional gender roles. My recollection of the conversation is summarised here:

I do not think women are discriminated against (*why*). I think there is a misunderstanding of roles... there is a role conflict because there are certain roles that women have to do and men cannot do them... Children when young need the love and care of a mother especially between 0 and 5 years. If the mother is missing these children will grow up missing something. This cannot change... no amount of gender equality can change this. In my tribe there are three things that can make a marriage null and void. The first is if the couple do not agree in bed. The second is if the woman is not performing her domestic roles like cooking and if the man is too sensitive so as to

count the pieces of meat hence interfering with the work of the woman in the kitchen. The last one is if the woman does not give birth... Therefore if gender equality means that men do certain chores traditionally done by women, then it is will not work. It is bound to fail... After all most of the gender activists in this country have not been good role models because most of them are single women and others are divorcees. If we had really good women spearheading the campaign then it would be good.

(I was surprised and asked him to say more about good role models)

The first woman Member of Parliament in Kenya came from my tribe. So in my tribe we do not discriminate against women. She remained a good role model because she stuck in her marriage despite the fact that her husband was useless. He drunk himself senseless but she was there to serve him. She was the MP but when she went back home, she was a good wife because she cooked for him and even went to look for him in the bars where he was drinking and bring him home. Look at the MP for f**** she is a good role model because she has stuck in her marriage in spite of the problems she has faced (senior male manager).

For this man manager the fact that the first woman Member of Parliament came from his tribe makes him conclude that there is no gender discrimination. He ignores the fact that after that woman there has never been another woman elected MP from his tribe for over 35 years. Again, it appears that the man takes women's continued oppression, for example, staying in an abusive marriage, as an example of good role modelling.

During the conversation we moved on to talk about the situation of women in politics in the Kenyan society. There was a parliamentary election coming up in two days time in one of the constituencies in his hometown where an MP had died. A woman was contesting and I asked him whether he thought that the woman would win. He said:

In fact that woman is not staying with a man at the moment. Her history is not well known because she did not marry a man from our tribe in the first place. And even that husband, we do not know, they might have separated or divorced. Again when you listen to her, one gets the impression that she is not normal (senior male manager).

I was really surprised at this man's assessment of the woman. My own and other few women's assessment of the woman was that she was really intelligent and very brave to contest the seat in spite of the prevailing hostile political environment for women (see section 2.2.3). On launching her

election campaign the woman had said, 'I am a total woman, no one can move me, not even a man, I am fighting for a total people and I am going to thrash all the men in this election'. There were two men contesting in this by election. Most men did not take these words kindly. The campaigns were launched when I was attending the International Gender conference held outside Nairobi and I was watching the news with a few other women who were attending the conference. Later during the closing ceremony of the conference one academic man who was officiating observed that Kenya needs more women like her for gender equality to be realised. And yet most men were interpreting her assertiveness and courage as a sign of abnormality. A few days into the campaigns this woman was attacked by a mob of angry youth that smashed the windscreen of her car and she escaped with minor injuries. In spite of the media coverage of the attack, the incident was treated lightly by the electoral commission who described it as unfortunate but said that they could not do anything unless she lodged a formal complaint. The woman lost the elections miserably earning only 600 votes as compared to the winner's 12, 000.

The informal discussion with the man manager and the views expressed by men in the seminars and conferences I attended during the fieldwork suggest that the Kenyan society is reluctant to recognise the contribution and participation of women in public decision making. Again in this society single women are not respected (see sections 2.3.1 and 2.3.2). The two single women in this study (Natasha and Eunice) said that they were encountering negative attitudes towards them because of their marital status at the societal level.

At my place of work I cannot say I have encountered any negative attitudes. But at the societal level I have encountered this especially in my church, there are certain responsibilities that cannot be given to me as a single woman because it is assumed that it will not be a good example to young girls (Natasha).

I have encountered negative attitudes outside my workplace, you know society expects you to have been married at a certain age. I think this is due to the traditional expectations and roles assigned to men and women in society (Eunice).

The experiences of these two women suggest that the universities (professional context) are beginning to accept single women as opposed to the wider society. The change in the university can be attributed to the fact that there are increased campaigns for gender equality at the international level that make it difficult for public institutions to openly discriminate against a person. The discrimination at the university level as discussed in this chapter is subtler.

The perceptions of the men and women interviewed in this study on the traditional gender roles appear to suggest a strong belief in the retention of these roles especially for women. It appears that in addition to taking up full time employment in the public sphere with all its demands, women in this context are expected to perform their traditional gender roles as mothers and wives. These expectations lead to conflicts between societal norms and values and the professional expectations. I argue that these conflicts pose a big challenge for women managers more than men in the Kenyan context.

Reasons for retention of traditional gender roles

Evidence from the study suggests various reasons why some men and women advocate for the retention of the traditional gender roles. The first possible reason is that they perceive that some of these roles like child rearing are biologically determined and hence cannot change. This perception is revealed by the comments made by Geoffrey and the senior male manager. These two men argue that children need the care of their mother when they are young and this cannot be changed. Geoffrey argues that the involvement of women in work far from home has led to children missing out on good role models in their mothers.

The second reason why traditional gender roles are preferred is the belief that they are part of the cultural heritage. Richard from the private university explained:

... you know in our culture where most of us have grown ...I even heard my mum ask me when I was growing up 'why are you crying

like a woman?’ Now that is my mother and she is a woman... I was told, ‘you have to do this because you are a man’, now you cannot remove that one... I have to behave like a man... to be a very strong character that I do not have to show tears ... I remember I was escorting my sister at the age of 13 and she was 18 to the shop because I was a man... all along I have grown up like that.. even as we do things we tend to think that women are a weaker sex and they are emotionally softer... so our culture makes me to believe that... that attitude has made me grow knowing that I am the person who matters... I have been hardened such that if I encounter hard circumstances I have to manage them better than a woman and I think that cuts across our managerial positions.... Therefore, society cannot change overnight... it will take time to remove this image... even when you look at western countries especially the composition of their governments, when you hear a lady like Margaret Thatcher being Prime Minister, she has gone through difficulties because very few women make it (Richard).

The perception of gender roles as a cultural heritage lead to the positioning of those who go against the culture as outsiders or abnormal or (see the description of the woman contesting for a parliamentary seat in this section) aping a foreign culture which is detrimental to the traditional way of life. This perception also removes the blame from individual men who expect women to perform these roles because the argument advanced is that “ it is part of our culture or society” (Riley 2003, p.104).

Another possible reason why the traditional gender roles for women are preferred is that some of the men (Geoffrey) still believe that the man should be the breadwinner while the women remain at home to take care of the children. For these reasons, some of the men and women interviewed in this study strive to maintain the traditional gender roles. Therefore, although some of the men and women accept that women should be given equal opportunities in the modern public sector, they are reluctant to accept radical changes to the gender roles. As a result it is left to the women to struggle and combine their professional roles with their gender roles as women.

8.4 Views on the Participation of women in university management

Most of the women and men interviewed in this study attributed the underrepresentation of women in university management to the few numbers

of women who have attained the necessary academic qualifications and experiences to be appointed as managers. Some of their views included:

You know in management they will not pick from out there ... so the first question to ask is how many women are lecturers... how many women are senior lecturers ... that ratio will tell you why we have few women in management... So if we have to increase the number of women in management this is not something that will start today... it is something that we have to go back to the classrooms. So ten years from now then we can talk of women or maybe five but I think many years because we are talking of from primary school through secondary and through to university (Ian).

...to get a position you also need to have achieved. Of course they are not going to take an ordinary lecturer and make her vice chancellor...first of all we agree that the statistics for women is small right from primary education, you know there are many factors that keep girls out of school... (Sofia).

...whenever they are employing someone they are looking for PhD holders not many women have them maybe by virtue of our multiple roles (Connex).

Others blamed the traditional African culture, which has for a long time discriminated against women in terms of the provision of education and requires women to perform multiple roles:

... it was that priority and preference was to the boy child. Such that if you and I were born in a family and my family cannot afford to pay school fees for the two of us, they would opt for me to study even if you are more intelligent than me...so ladies were discriminated against...if you look at it in terms of professional courses and career choices, you realise that either because of those cultural attitudes against the girl child... most girls tended not to go into professions as many men also there is this issue of male chauvinism, the attitude that a woman cannot deliver... So I cannot blame it on women I blame it on our society...right now the cut off point for the lady is slightly lower than that of men ...it is an encouragement for more of them to access what they were denied. It is not a favour being done to them it is simply a realisation from the societal point of view that we denied them let us compensate... (Albert).

...it lies within ourselves as women to some extent for example do we aspire for these positions in the first place... right from the time we are children women are socialised in a different way... how men view women. So if a man has been socialised in such a way that he can never imagine that he can be answerable to a woman then definitely a

woman who makes it to the top... will have a lot of problems ...if she has men under her...Stereotypes the idea that women should be this or that...has also limited the growth of women, what women believe about themselves and what men believe about women... Multiple roles performed by women... (Eunice).

Some of the women and men interviewed held the view that women were not committed and aggressive enough to compete for the management positions and they lack support from their spouses:

Another reason is that women at the higher levels are not aggressive. There is a certain degree of conformity among women...I believe that if you are fighting to get to the top the gender roles, family roles pull you down. For some women it is the men in their lives (Sofia).

... the number of women generally in university teaching is small... in this university for example out of say about seven hundred members of staff the women are a hundred and something which is quite small... the other is that women are low key, they are not as outgoing as men...if there was an issue where lobbying is needed the men would do it more than women...I have also noticed many women do not want to come into these positions because there are other constraints from the family in the sense that the support may not be forthcoming. The other is the demand...given our environment ... their demands are more at the domestic level...then our public really ridicules women... many women would rather keep their privacy than come out in public and expose themselves... (Edna).

Surprisingly none of the women and men interviewed in this study supported the use of affirmative action as a strategy to enhance the participation of women in university management. Instead they were of the opinion that affirmative action should not be used beyond the level of admission of female students to the university:

I agree with affirmative action as long as it only lasts to admissions... after that they should compete equally... It should not be continued beyond admission... it is only temporary and corrective (Beatrice).

.. the girls are usually given a point lower than the cut off... that is a right move but some people say it is not fair, the girls are being favoured but given our history, I think it is proper. We should look forward to a time when we won't have to do this for the girl child (Edna).

... I have no quarrel with affirmative action up to university admission... (Natasha).

This lack of support for affirmative action might be attributed to various reasons. Some felt that merit should be the main criterion used to appoint managers because they had earned their positions on merit:

Personally... I believe in qualifications... I have always gotten what I have through a qualification... if a woman is qualified... and a man who is less qualified is appointed then that is very unfair... what I wouldn't like is for a woman to want a position just because women have been marginalised in the past (Natasha).

so it becomes very difficult if we are promoting on merit to say that now because this university or this department has seven lecturers six men and one woman and because we want gender equality we have to appoint this woman to be the head.... if we are talking about merit then we have to go for numbers... whenever we have started lobbying and saying we need so many women in this university... I do not know exactly what will be said... Do we pick those who are there to bring them into management simply because they are women? (Ian).

Another possible reason for lack of support for affirmative action may be that some of them fear that it will portray women as being weak and therefore need to be supported or uplifted in order to compete with men hence reinforcing the superiority of men over women. Again there was fear among some women and men that if affirmative action is applied beyond admissions it may lead to complacency among women who will not work hard to earn their positions on merit. Some of the views relating to this include:

But my quarrel with that idea is that if it makes the women work less knowing that they will go to the university with a point less and then they will miss out on very good careers ... or if it brings up the general idea that women are poor, they have to be uplifted by a point. I am not for that (Natasha).

... here is a woman who is not committed to the university, who just comes in and goes out and when she is in a meeting ... doesn't contribute anything and then you say affirmative action and you give her a position, really are you being fair?... So I am not against affirmative action... I am simply saying that it must be given to people who really show commitment and interest (Ronald).

Other interviewees like Geoffrey thought that men and women academic staff should be treated the same in the allocation of responsibilities in the university:

In terms of responsibilities, teaching loads and the like I should treat them at par because I look at specialities. So they should be able to deliver equally... during a crisis I may look at their circumstances but under normal circumstances ... there should be a good balance in allocating duties but maybe the time issues I try and make sure the ladies do not go too late or they do not have to come extremely early. That is when now I will start getting sensitive to whether they are female or male. When doing the timetable. But ideally I should treat them the same (Geoffrey).

An analysis of the reasons given for women's underrepresentation in university management by the men and women interviewed in this study suggest that most of the barriers are perceived to be outside the university environment. The emphasis on the few numbers as the main reason why women are underrepresented in university management seems to point to the critical mass theory advanced by Kanter (1977). In this theory Kanter believed that entry into the formal system and hence access to power and opportunity is determined by the relative numbers of women and men in the organisation. Kanter suggests that a critical mass of woman in the workforce is required to influence organisational change and remove women from their token status in the organisation.

The critical mass theory has been criticised by other feminists as essentialising women's participation in organisational life and considering women as a homogenous group, without reference to social class, ethnicity, age, sexualities or disabilities (Morley 1994, 1999 and Morley and Walsh 1996). The critical mass theory has also been accused of suggesting an essentialist, universalised construction of women by implying that, in seniority, they will function differently from men, and therefore change organisational culture. Research done elsewhere (Morley 1999, Gupton and Slick 1996 and Wyn and Acker 2000) and evidence from this study has shown that women who achieve management positions do not necessarily strive to bring about change in the universities that is geared towards making them women friendly for various reasons (see section 9.2 in chapter 9). For example, interviewees in Morley (1999,p.75) observed that the presence of women in senior positions is not an accurate measure of organisational

development, because “being female does not necessarily mean that one will identify with feminism, nor are all feminists reflexive about their location in organisational power relations”. Furthermore, Morley (ibid) argues a process of ‘masculination’ can occur for ‘successful’ women.

Again most respondents in this study emphasised the role of socialisation and the traditional culture and the multiple roles of women as a reason they are underrepresented in university management. They ignore the masculine nature of the universities that have continued to position women as outsiders within. In other words the views seem to suggest that the problem lies with the women who are not aggressive or committed to their academic work as the men. This kind of argument is likely to leave the patriarchal culture of the university environment intact and continue to put pressure on the women to work hard so as to fit in.

8.5. Conclusion

In this chapter I have explored the discrimination experienced by the women interviewed in this study in the two universities. The narratives of the women and men interviewed construct women as outsiders within who have ventured into a world that they do not understand as being dominated by a male culture. The men in this context appear to be resisting their presence in subtle and sometimes open ways. The women’s experiences of discrimination lead to feelings of frustration, stress, guilt, self doubt and self blame on the part of the women.

The data on the positioning of these women as ‘outsiders within’ the university supports other feminist critical studies. Extensive feminist studies of how women are positioned in universities as academics and managers and other organisations allude to women being positioned as *outsiders within* (Clark and Corcoran 1986, Aisenberg and Harrington 1988, Kelly 1993) *strangers* (Packer 1995, Kent and Palmer 1999) *outgroup members* (Kanter 1977) *matter out of place* (Game 1994), *transgressors* (Walsh 1995) *outside of the norm* (Powney and Weiner 1992) *travellers in a male world* (Marshall 1984 and Gherardi 1995) and *initiates who wandered into a ritual*

designed for men (Beaman-Smith and Placier 1996). These studies attribute this positioning of women to various reasons. One reason is that the values and attitudes, which underpin the work of the academy, are masculinist in that the pursuit of knowledge, recognition and status rely on engaging in a competitive struggle for self promotion and authority. These values and norms of behaviour and practice are often alien and unfamiliar to women (Kent and Palmer 1999). Another reason for women's positioning is that by engaging in research, teaching and taking up management positions in the universities, women transgress into an area traditionally monopolised by men (Walsh 1995). Other feminists argue that women are strangers in academia not only because of their numerical proportion but also because academic discourse and practices marginalise them (Walsh 1995, Packer 1995 and Morley 1994).

Although the experiences of the women in this study resonate with experiences of women managers in other parts of the world as shown by the literature cited here, the evidence from this study suggests that the main reason why these women managers are positioned as outsiders within is the socio- cultural expectations that determine the roles women and men are supposed to play in the Kenyan society. Because of these socio cultural expectations and gender stereotypes prevalent in this society, there is constant conflict between societal norms and values, and the professional expectations that pose contradictions and challenges for women that are unique to the Kenyan context. The women and men manager's perceptions of gender roles appear to suggest a society that is reluctant to do away with these beliefs in spite of embracing new modes of living (western culture). Women are therefore expected to perform their traditional gender roles and at the same time meet their career obligations.

Chapter Nine: ‘Working Extra Hard’

9.1 Introduction

Working hard is often the advice given to women aspiring for academic and management positions in universities. This advice is often as a result of the perception among many women that “women need not only to have a strong work ethic but also to be willing and to work harder than their male counterparts” (Gupton and Slick 1996, p.46). Evidence from this study shows that the women interviewed thought that they needed to work harder in order prove themselves as capable managers. This chapter examines the strategies used by the men and women in the study to overcome the challenges they faced as managers.

9.2 Strategies for overcoming challenges

Some of the strategies adopted by the women and men in this study include working extra hard, family support, use of househelps, separating personal and professional roles, teamwork and relying on God. These strategies are discussed in the following sections.

9.2.1 Working Extra Hard

Most of the women and some of the men interviewed in this study indicated that in order to cope with the work overload they were putting in more hours into their office work. Field observations revealed that most of the managers were starting their work early (7.00 am) and finishing late (6.00 pm). The office hours in Kenya are between 8.00 am and 5.00 pm with one hour lunch break at 1.00 pm. I observed that some managers were not even having lunch breaks due to their busy schedules. For example, during my interview with Gordon, which took place between 3.30 pm – 4.30 pm, his secretary came in shortly after the start of the interview to deliver his lunch. I offered to wait outside to allow him have his lunch but he told me to carry on with the interview as he would have his lunch later. So, by the time I was leaving

his office (4.30pm) he had not eaten his lunch. Some of the experiences of the managers showing how they were working extra hard are summarised here:

...even if it is some work you have to carry it home in order to continue in the evening... even when people are on holiday or even when you are on leave you continue doing that work... Sometimes you combine a lot of things (Kristine).

...what I have done is try to do my official duties by allocating them extra time like you will find that many times I am awake by 4.00 am (in the morning?) yes, because here things work by deadlines. If something is wanted at 12.00 noon of any particular day you have to meet that deadline... I am also doing my private studies... all these things I would say I just have to give them extra time. So sometimes I *feel stressed but that is the only way I can survive* [my emphasis]. Because I have to do the job as well as provide for the other things (Connex).

So what I find being in this office is that ...my work just continues at home. Like now I have scripts I had planned to finish marking but today I have had to deal with so many issues I had not planned for... so what I had planned to do I will start doing it at 5.00 pm (Eunice).

So I come very early in the morning and I leave the office at 6.00 pm and not 5.00 pm and I am in the office at lunch time (Ian).

To cope with work overload... what I do is that I continue with official work outside office hours. So after 5.00 pm I remain in the office until 10.00 pm writing, on weekends I am be in the office doing my own work but sometimes doing university work (Ronald).

From these experiences it appears that for these women there are more demands on their time from the office work than the home. This is probably because most of them had grown up children. Another reason is that some of them (Natasha and Eunice) were single while Connex worked and lived away from home. Ronald was also single.

Working extra hard meant that the managers in this study had to reorganise their time in order to be able to meet the extra demands. Derrick from the private university shared his experience:

So to cope with the challenge of balancing my teaching, research, writing and management responsibilities I had to redesign or

reorganise my time... I have to find time for my recreation... for my personal reading... for my students... to go for either library or fieldwork and the time to put those matters in print... so knowing that my day is twelve hours for example, I wake up... I know my religious duties which I attend to, then my lecture schedule and management responsibilities, then I have my free time... so that is the time I am doing my personal reading, preparing the lectures and doing my library work... But then I discovered that the weekend was the best for me. So Saturday unless there is a workshop or seminar... I have to make sure that I have five hours of serious work... And then Sunday, surely is the day, which I have also to kind of free myself from hard work and relax and gather strength (Derrick).

Derrick like Ronald is able to reorganise his time because he is single and does not therefore have the demands of family responsibilities like most of the managers in this study.

The strategy of working extra hard has been found to be the one adopted by most women academics and managers in universities (Powney and Weiner 1992, Bagihole 1994, Acker and Feuerverger 1997, Mabokela 2003, Ward and Wolf-Wendel 2004). Acker and Feuerverger (1997) in their interviews with 27 women full and associate professors in five universities in Canada found that these women were working harder than they should. One woman administrator in their study spoke about having to work extra hard and said that:

Often, you work late in the evenings to catch up on stuff you didn't get done during the day. And you're still trying to read and keep up in your area...knowing that you would have to go the extra mile in order to be heard, to be seen as important. And I found that very hard, very, very, very tiring (Acker and Feuerverger 1997, p.127).

Similar findings are reported by Bagihole (1994) in her interviews with 43 women from a university in the UK. The women interviewed by Bagihole (ibid) felt that they had to work extra hard because they were expected to be better than their male colleagues in order to succeed.

The coping strategy for high workload of having to start early and finishing late, carrying work home, cancelling holidays are practices that have led to what some feminists have called the re-masculinisation of management. In this re-masculinisation women managers only survive if they emulate the

behaviours of the male colleagues like working long hours (Collinson and Collinson 1997). It has been argued elsewhere in this thesis that working extra hard in terms of putting in more hours disadvantages women in this context because they are expected to be better than men and when they make mistakes they are judged more harshly than men. Again the women work hard because initially their management abilities are doubted. They have to prove that they are capable before they are confirmed as managers (see sections 6.4 and 7.2).

9.2.2 Teamwork

Soliciting support from colleagues was another strategy adopted by the men and women in this study to cope with the challenges they faced. Some of the experiences of the managers about the support they got from teams are summarised here:

I have managed to overcome these challenges out of the cooperation of the staff and administration... it has been a joint effort... I also do a lot of consultations with the staff... because of teamwork we have managed to overcome the challenges (Arnold).

I learnt that it is important to have committees and after a committee has made a recommendation I shared this information in a departmental meeting... then people were able to own whatever was going on (Edna).

The members of staff in the department are quite cooperative in the sense that you ask them for something at a particular time and they try and do it (Eunice).

So what we try to do is to operate with a lot of support from those we work with. We don't want to be a lone player. We want to be a team player. We also want to do a lot of consultations... that as you make decisions you are including as many people as possible. So that people do not feel that you are making decisions, which are impacting on them without consulting them (Kristine).

Building teams was sometimes perceived as being easy for men and difficult for women who are still not accepted as managers by some men (See section 7.5).

9.2.3 Separating personal and professional roles

Writing on balancing personal and professional responsibilities Wisker (1996) observes that sometimes it may be useful to “keep separate some activities in your work, home or other areas of your life because then you have something totally different to turn to should disaster strike” (p.140). Wisker argues that for example, if you play squash, enjoy riding, there is no reason why that should be affected by a particular manager finding fault with your work, blocking your new idea, or removing from you an area of work you enjoy. In this sense Wisker (ibid) thinks that some balance can be achieved by maintaining a home life which provides an escape from work demands, or work life, which provides an escape from home.

Some of the managers interviewed here tried to separate their professional roles from their personal/domestic roles as a strategy to enable them cope with the challenge of combining these roles:

I know I have priorities in life because when it is office I know it is office work and whoever is staying with me knows that (Sofia).

... When I go home I leave my office behind. I try to work as hard as I can when I am here and when I go home I try to do my best for my family. Sometimes you have so much to do but I try to get time for my family. And I am very good at that. My brain works in such a way that I can turn things off so when I go home I am still not thinking about the office... (Claire).

I try to plan such that I come very early in the morning and also leave a bit late in order not to find myself for example, in the office on Saturdays or carrying a lot of work to the house (Ian).

And in situations where I find there are conflicts because within the office you can always have one or two things that annoy you... I try not to transfer it home; it is like it ends here (Geoffrey).

The strategy of separating the personal and professional roles is probably influenced by the fact that in the Kenya society this distinction is maintained (see sections 7.4 and 8.3). It is likely that the women and men in this study had been socialised to separate the public and private sphere.

During the fieldwork, however, I observed that it was not easy for some of the women managers I interviewed to keep the private (home) issues totally

separate from their office work. For example, on the day of my interview with Connex, she received a telephone call from her husband informing her that her househelp was unwell and he had sent her to Nairobi so that she would take her to hospital. Note that it is considered a woman's obligation to see to the wellbeing of her househelp. The husband would not be expected in this context to take time off from his office to attend to what is considered a woman's responsibility (see section 9.2.5). This early morning telephone call seemed to disorganise Connex's programme for the day. She told me that we had to finish the interview quickly so that she could go to town to meet the girl at the bus stop and take her to hospital. Again some of the men and women interviewed in this study said that because of their busy schedules in the office, they carried on with their office work at home.

Other women (Sofia and Edna) said that they found it necessary to keep their family members informed of what they were doing in the office in order to get the necessary support. A feminist critical analysis of the coping strategy of separating the personal and professional roles suggests that the women were expected not to let their gender roles (private) to interfere with the performance of their professional roles on one hand. And on the other hand these women's seniority in the professional sphere (manager) was supposed to be kept away from their private status (subordinate) as women in the home. For example, when Sofia's husband was reluctant to support her appointment into management, she assured him that nothing was going to change at home because "I do not carry this position with me home" meaning that she will continue performing her responsibilities as a mother and a wife irrespective of her seniority in her professional role (see section 8.3).

9.2.4 Family Support

Support from family or close personal relationships is instrumental in women's career development (Gupton and Slick 1996). The importance of family support in these managers' career advancement has been discussed in section 6.4. This support was again considered important in helping the

women managers cope with the challenges they were facing. The support of the spouse was considered important in this context and it took various forms. For some of the women the spouse was available to stay with the children when they were required to travel away from home for official duties. Beatrice said of her husband:

My husband is very supportive and he encourages me and so that is instrumental... if I had to go away, he is there for the children and so he is very supportive (Beatrice).

For other women the spouse provided the financial and material support needed for career advancement. This is the support Sofia got from her spouse:

I also travel a lot and I have not got any resistance about that. In fact like my husband facilitates all that... Like recently I went to West Africa and I got an urgent phone call to go there and I didn't have money and the people asked me to pay for my ticket and then they would refund. I just called him and he said 'how much is it? I told him the amount and he gave me (Sofia).

Edna also gets the support of her family and the husband allows her to travel whenever she is required to do so:

...my job now and even before involves a lot of travel here and there. What I do is that I tell my family that 'there is this invitation in good time, can I go or can I not?' And we kind of get consensus. But in my new office now some are very abrupt, I alerted them and they are aware of that (Edna).

In this context the support the men managers expect from their wives is different from the one women managers expect to get from their husbands. The men expected moral support and a peaceful home environment from their wives. For example, Geoffrey has brought it to the *understanding* of his wife the busy nature of his management role. She, therefore, does not complain even if he spends a lot of time in the office (see section 7.4). Geoffrey also thinks that a peaceful environment at home increases productivity at work:

... I have noticed a situation where there have been conflicts in the home... productivity in the office is reduced...when it is peaceful at home productivity in the office increases and the output is good... so it is no use trying to produce hundred percent here when there are chaos at home (Geoffrey).

As argued elsewhere in the thesis the husbands play a very important role in allowing their wives to pursue their career and also take up management positions (see section 6.4) The women in this study have found it necessary to involve their spouses probably to reduce the conflicts that are likely to arise due to long hours in the office and travelling a way from home at short notice. My earlier research (Onsongo 2002) found that where the husbands were not supportive of their wives management careers, conflicts arose that sometimes resulted in divorce.

9.2.5 Househelps

Most career women in Kenya take on members of the extended family who are unable to meet the cost of their basic needs to work for them as househelps for a salary. There have been occasions in the past where parents gave their young girls to work as househelps in order to be able to pay for the education of their younger siblings, mainly boys. The incidence of under age girls working as househelps has gone down in the recent past due to increased campaigns against child labour and the introduction of free primary education in Kenya in 2003. Now career women employ mature women as househelps. Some of these women are single mothers who are either separated from their husbands or who have had children out of wedlock. The income they get is used to support their children who in most cases live with their parents in the rural areas.

Most of the women interviewed here mentioned that they were able to advance their career and concentrate on their office work because there were people at home doing the household chores. This is how the women spoke about the help they were getting from the househelps:

We thank God for people who can help us in the house. So you tell them that on Tuesday you clean the house, on Wednesday you wash the sheets. That way you find it lighter. You are not directly doing it but you are involved (Edna).

... here in Kenya, with the house work I do not think I would manage my office work well without the help I get from my househelp at home. I get very tired in the evening and her being there helps me a lot (Claire).

We normally have support in the houses that actually are very crucial to our career development because without them I do not know how we would manage... (Kristine).

The househelps are even more crucial when one has young children. An informal conversation I had with a woman colleague who had been promoted to a more demanding position in my university revealed the important role the househelps play:

The main challenge now is that I have more responsibilities than before. At the home front... I also have more responsibilities as opposed to when I had one child. What is helping me to cope is that I have a very nice househelp... That helps me not to worry about the children when I am in the office. It gives me peace of mind to do the office work... Again because my children are so young I have had to pay for more house help. In addition to the full time one I have another one who comes twice a week to do the cleaning and washing of clothes... However I retain some responsibilities as a mother and a wife. I still have to decide what is to be eaten, what the children will wear and ensure that things are in order. I have delegated a lot at home but I have not abdicated (woman manager).

The househelps relieve the women from the manual work in the houses but the women have direct supervision over them:

...like every woman you start the day from your house. You want to ensure that everything is going on well... that there is food in your house, that whoever you are delegating responsibilities to is going to be able to perform and you put measures in place to ensure that nothing will go wrong when you are away. And during the day you still have to keep on calling your house to find out whether things are alright (Kristine).

The issue of women using other women to advance their career has often been seen by men and some women as oppression or taking advantage of their fellow women for personal gain. In most conferences and seminars on the gender equality debate I attended in the course of my fieldwork, the question often asked by the men in these meetings was, *'what are you educated and powerful women doing to empower the grassroots woman especially those maids in your houses?'* This is a very loaded question that would require another study. The question appears to divert the attention from the gender discrimination women experience. The men asking the

question appear to suggest that the cause of women's oppression is social class and not gender.

From an African feminist perspective the issue of social class is not emphasised as in western feminism (Mikell 1997). Because there are many women in Kenya who live below the poverty line (see section 2.2) and lack in basic needs, the employment of poor women as househelps is often seen by some as a way of empowering them economically. Some of these women who work as househelps have used the income earned to pay for the education of their children. Some have made savings that have been used to help them acquire some skills such as tailoring and they have gone on to establish their own small businesses. This argument does not mean that I support the exploitation of women by other women.

9.2.6 Relying on God

All the managers interviewed here were Christians. Surprisingly most of the women and men managers in the public and the private university pointed to the importance of their Christian beliefs in helping them overcome the challenges they faced. Some of the comments the managers made about their Christian beliefs include:

I am a Christian and I think that makes a lot of difference. I have talked about stewardship and I think... as a person I live in time or my Christian belief is that I live in time and eternity. So beyond this there is still a life and I have to be accountable to my creator who has given me the opportunities or the duties or the relationships and many other things which I have to handle, not mine but His... this has really helped in situations where sometimes I have been faced with a crisis in the office...I look at the situation and say , 'what is it that God wants me to learn from this?...because these are his people and I am doing it on his behalf...so that has helped a great deal because then I don't look at it as suffering ... but I look at it with joy and learning... You know I take it with the stewardship mind simply knowing that I am accountable to somebody higher and beyond this there is a life. So I would say generally Christian principles are the ones, which have dictated the way I look at things and the way I carry out my duties (Geoffrey).

... I am a committed Christian, which is a requirement for one to be employed in this university. So this enables me to overcome some of these challenges. I have learnt to accept many things in life that they don't really bother me (Connex).

I am a Christian and I believe I am working with God's people and that affects the way I do things (Claire).

... there is nothing I consider impossible in this office because I do not approach things with my power... there is that recognition of another power beyond I. So I believe that those that I can't do, this other power is going to carry them through... Actually I believe there is nothing that is going to be difficult. By my bed I think I have, I don't have it here but it is by my bed, a poster that says, 'Nothing is going to happen to me today which you and I can't handle together' meaning which God and I cannot handle (Edna).

... I think I am a Christian and I always believe that whatever I have gotten has come from God. That for me anything that he [God] has brought my way I believe that, so I have inner strength from my belief in Jesus Christ and my own personal relationship with him. So through challenges and what not God has helped me to overcome (Beatrice).

The comments by the interviewees suggest that they believe that God will help them overcome or cope with the challenges they face as managers. There are several possible reasons why the women and men in this study rely on God to overcome their challenges. The main reason is that they have taken the positions they occupy as being a service to God. Because they are serving God, therefore, they depend on Him to give them direction and leadership as to the best way possible to lead His people. This is the way Geoffrey, Beatrice and Claire perceive their positions. It is also possible that some of the managers strongly believe in the biblical teaching of casting all their burdens unto the Lord who is all-able and will carry them on their behalf (Edna and Beatrice). Their belief in life after death also contributes to the managers' reliance upon God. Geoffrey, for example, believes that he will be accountable for his actions even after he dies. Hence he has to seek God's guidance to avoid going against his will in this life.

Another reason for relying on God is that some of the women have been exposed to so much suffering in the past that they have learnt to accept problems in life. Connex from the private university shared her experience:

...I used to work in the Rift Valley during the tribal clashes (see section 2.2.3). I was a headmistress of a certain school that was really affected. And then even myself in the office, there was a lot of

harassment. So it is like even though here there are things I am not very happy about, I think I am ok compared to where I have come from (Connex).

The reliance on God can also be interpreted to mean that these women have lost hope of ever improving their situation because they lack agency. In other words they have taken to religion in Marx's terms as the 'opium of the poor'. The reliance on God, by most of the managers, as a coping strategy lead me to explore further some of their views on the role of Christianity in enhancing women's participation in public decision making in the Kenyan society. Edna observed that:

Religion can be two way. It can be escapist and at the same time it can really be positive. .. Right now there seems to be a lot of trouble in this country because women have gone into religion blindly. Some of the churches that have come up... I do not know whether you know that you and me can come together and start a church and I become the bishop and you the apostle. Now what some of these groups have done is that they have told these women that God is going to do everything for them. So they commit all their money to the church and they spend all their time in church praying including night prayers. That of course cannot work for the family. That is not the kind of religion that I would advocate for...so I am saying we have our beliefs but I think we need to handle religion responsibly... You also realise that most of their followers are women... we should ask, 'why are these new churches attracting mainly women... is it because women are hurting more or they express their hurt more than the men so they go there to seek solace?'. Actually even when they go for overnight prayers they are running away from violent situations at home... (Edna).

The views expressed by Edna appear to suggest that women in this context are turning to God because they lack the agency to question their oppression. At the same time these women are exploited by some of the religious groups they have run to. So the question is, to what extent is Christianity empowering women? In their analysis of Christianity, Christian feminists (see section 4.3.2) have found that it presents contradictory messages about the role of women in the church. Using Christian feminist analysis James (2002) identifies four themes in the New Testament section of the Bible , where most Christian principles are derived, that present conflict and contradiction for women Christians. They include leadership, submission, ministry and equality. I discuss these here briefly and show their implications for women's participation in university management.

Leadership

On leadership James (2002,p.25) observes that there are passages in the New Testament that portray women as playing leadership roles in the church while others command women to remain silent and not to have authority over men. For example, in the book of Romans 16: 1-5 the apostle Paul names women who have worked with him in his missionary work and recommends them to the other Christians. In 1 Timothy 2: 11-12 Paul's recommendation of the women is contradicted by his instruction to Christians not to allow women to teach or have authority in the church. Similarly, in 1 Timothy 3: 2-5 Paul gives the qualification of church elders and overseers as "a husband of one wife...". This passage is used to reinforce 1 Timothy 2: 11-12 as it implies that church leaders are men and therefore women should be excluded from leadership positions.

These passages have been used by many Christian churches to downplay the participation of women in church leadership. Using this passage most churches allow only men to preach and take leadership positions in the church whereas women are the listeners and followers. James (ibid) wonders whether the biblical teaching found in these passages would prevent women from assuming leadership positions outside the church. Evidence gained from this study shows that some Christian sponsored universities in Kenya are going beyond this limitation and have appointed women to management positions (see section 3.3.2). However, the appointment of a few women into leadership positions in a few of the Christian sponsored universities does not rule out the possibility of some conservative Christian men and women using the Christian teachings cited above to argue against the appointment of women into positions of leadership in the church and in society. Again it is possible that women who believe, and interpret these passages literally, can shy away from taking up leadership positions or can oppose those women who are campaigning for the increased participation of women in decision making in society.

Submission

The New Testament teaching on women's submission to men also poses some conflict for women who are Christians. The conflict is contained in two sets of passages in the New Testament section of the Bible. These are: Colossians 3: 18, Ephesians 5: 21-22 and Colossians 4:1, Ephesians 5: 23-24. The first set commonly referred to by Christians as household *codes* teaches Christians families on how to relate to each other as husbands and wives, to their children, and to their servants. These passages instruct wives to submit to their husbands, and husbands to love their wives as they love themselves. They point to a mutual relationship. In Ephesians 5: 24-26 Paul describes the responsibilities of both partners. He begins by instructing husband and wife to "submit to one another out of reverence for Christ". He sets out an extraordinary standard of self-giving for both of them. The husband is depicted as the head of the family. Paul explains the husband's headship by giving two illustrations; that husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her (Ephesians 5: 25) and as their own bodies (Ephesians 5:28).

The concept of submission has in most cases been associated with male headship and has been used to keep women in abusive situations such as physical violence, economic deprivation, verbal intimidation and deliberate humiliation. Worse still these passages cause women not to recognise or to admit that they are victims of violence. They are thrown into the conspiracy of silence. When extended outside the family and the church, the concept of submission of women to men's leadership has several implications for women's participation in leadership positions in society. Most women continue to accept men's dominance in leadership in society as ordained by God.

For the women in this study their understanding of submission could be one of the possible reasons why they denied that they experienced gender discrimination (see section 8.2). The concept of submission is likely to affect their response to gender discrimination in the university. It would be a

possible reason why they are not adopting strategies that are geared towards changing the status quo in their universities. It is also possible that it is the reason they perceive their appointments to management positions as coming from God and thus as a privilege that they do not deserve. The belief that the positions they occupy had been given to them by God is likely to influence the extent to which women in this context can apply, take up or campaign for management positions in the university and in society in general. Claire from the private university said:

When you know that the Lord has put you in a position then it gives you a lot of peace that all you can do is the best you can do (Claire).

This belief in waiting upon the Lord to give or appoint one to a position seems to suggest lack of agency for these women. One commentator in Kenya reflecting on the low participation of women in Kenyan politics in the run up to the 2002 parliamentary and presidential elections wrote:

It is disheartening to note that in Kenya women seem to have resigned to fate. They seem to want things to happen to them without taking the initiative to be part of the change they crave... women seem to be waiting for someone else to deliver them. But who will wake up women from their sleep, to do what they ought to do to improve their lot (Comment in East African Standard newspaper 21 August 2002).

Ministry

While women are portrayed in the Bible as having active roles in the ministry of Jesus (Luke 8: 1-3, John 4: 7-26) and also in the early church Romans (16:1-16, Acts 12:12), there are some passages that appear to silence women from church activities (James 2002, p.29). For example, 1 Corinthians 14: 34-35 commands women to be silent in the church, therefore denying them any chances of speaking in the church. Another passage 1 Corinthians 11: 5-6 requires women to cover their heads while in the church. Some churches have used these passages to deny women's participation in church activities and limit their dressing. When these passages are compared to others where the apostle Paul has acknowledged the role played by women in the early church they present conflicts for Christian women. There are cases where they have been used in the family and wider society to require women to keep quiet in the presence of men. In the context of

university management, women and men who believe and interpret these passages literally are likely to expect women not to speak in public forums or occupy leadership positions (see the experiences of Sofia and Edna in section 8.2.1). Women, on the other hand, may shy away from making contributions in meetings.

Equality

The passage in Galatians 3: 28 appears to contradict all the passages that portray negative attitudes towards women such as 1Corinthians 11:2-16, 14:33-36; Ephesians 5: 22-23 and 1 Timothy 2: 8-15. The passages advocates for equality of all peoples irrespective of sex or race:

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male or female; for you are one in Christ Jesus (Gal.3:28 The New King James Version).

This passage has been interpreted by some scholars as a necessary theological starting point for any discussion on the role of women in the church (Gasque 1986 and Kasomo 2004). This is because in the text all forms of discrimination that are found outside the church are considered irrelevant to church leadership. The extent to which this passage can be used to argue for gender equality in society is not yet known.

James (2002) concludes that taken literally the Bible is full of contradictions or conflicting messages, particularly in matters touching on women. But when read in context and analysed critically, it does not teach subordination of women to men or a hierarchy of authority that places men above women nor does it deny leadership roles to women. This is exemplified in the passages in the New Testament.

Implications of these strategies on women's participation in university management in Kenya.

The foregoing discussion has shown that the women managers in this study adopted various strategies in order to cope with the challenges they were facing. The strategies adopted by these women were mainly geared towards

enabling the women to fit in the prevailing university culture. The women worked long hours and extra hard to cope with the heavy workload and more so to prove that they were capable. They tried to separate their personal roles (home) from their professional (office) roles because the wider society and university culture expected them to do so. They also paid for extra help at home by employing househelps. What is unique and significant, however, is that these women relied on God, a supernatural power to help them to cope with their challenges. Indeed some of the strategies adopted here had led some of the women to compromise and make sacrifices on their private lives and career advancement.

Women academics and managers in universities in other parts of the world have been found to adopt various strategies in order to cope with the challenging demands of their positions, firstly, as academics and managers and secondly as women (Sheppard 1989, Hornby and Shaw 1996, Ward and Wolf-Wendel 2004, Wyn and Acker 2000). Sheppard (1989) cited in Hornby and Shaw (1996, p.86) identified two broad coping strategies used by female managers in universities. The first one is “*blending in*”. The blending in strategy is characterised by conforming to the prevailing expectations of male co-workers. Hornby and Shaw call this strategy coping with “*assimilated status*”. The second strategy is “*taking a rightful place*” where by women managers accept the organisational goals but become critical of the male dominance. They do this by making moves towards being properly accommodated in the mainstream management role (p 86). Hornby and Shaw (ibid) propose a third strategy that is adopted by those who choose to fulfil their career goals outside the mainstream, these “*take a different place*”. The strategies adopted by the women in this study appear to fall into the blending in category.

Elsewhere Ward and Wolf-Wendel (2004) based on their research on women in Canadian universities also found that the women in their study adopted what they call a *satisficing* strategy when they realised that they could not cope with the demands of their personal and professional responsibilities as academics, managers and mothers. Ward and Wolf-

Wendel (ibid) note that *Satisficing* is an economic term used to describe a decision that is good enough though it may not be necessarily the best. The women in Ward and Wolf-Wendel's study had also learnt to accept that they were not able to be the best all the time but were content with being good enough. This acceptance had led the women surveyed to make some compromises on the kinds of research projects they were going to accomplish, others on the types of avenues in which they were going to publish, and over the scholarship they were going to produce.

Similarly, the women in this study seemed to have accepted that they could only do so much. This was reflected by the fact that they left what they thought they could not challenge to God. These women had also made some compromises and sacrifices in their personal lives and career advancement in order to cope with the management responsibilities. For example Edna said:

Part of my life has suffered... my research is really not going on because this is a demanding office... most of my research now tends to be library based and I use research assistants and questionnaires a lot. I also walk around with a bag all the time that contains either work to be edited or data to be analysed... I receive many requests to give conference papers but I have got to be selective because the time is not there (Edna).

One woman manager from the private university talked of survival as a strategy she was using to cope with the excessive demands on her time. When asked to elaborate on what she meant by survival she said:

Sometimes you know there is a lot of work and surviving means... 'you are just keeping your head above water... sometimes the expectations and the timings make you feel that you are trying to keep your head above a swimming pool...above water (Eunice).

One possible reason why these women adopted strategies that were not geared towards changing the status quo is that they were likely to be marginalised further within the university. This is the reason Wyn and Acker (2000) found in their interviews with eight women managers in Canada (3) and Australia (5). In their study aimed at exploring ways in which senior women academics are positioned and position themselves as change agents within academia Wyn and Acker (ibid) found that the women in trying to be

overly assertive and striving for change within their universities brought about problems and contradictions for themselves. For example, they risked rejection for any action that made them appear overly assertive. Again in trying to change the status quo the:

...women thought they would be contributing to a construction of women in universities as necessarily 'different' always against the grain and in so doing, are ironically reinforcing the reality of a 'mainstream' occupied by men (Wyn and Acker, p. 443 emphasis original).

Another reason why these women did not strive to change the status quo is probably because they found it easier to work with established institutional policies and practices. Wyn and Acker (ibid) also found that sometimes the women they interviewed found it easier to work with established institutional policies and practices because work moved faster. One woman manager interviewed in their study said:

At the same time, you know, I am sure there's ways in which I've learned to do things administratively in some really traditional kinds of ways because they work, because, they're not as time consuming as other kinds of ways (Wyn and Acker 2000, p.443).

It is also possible that these women were not adopting strategies geared towards changing the status quo because the majority gained their management positions through appointment. Therefore, it is possible that they did not want to appear disloyal to the vice chancellors who appointed them by questioning some of the institutional policies and practices that were discriminating against them as women. Nzomo (1993) observes that since the few women who attain important decision making positions in Kenya are "appointees or have struggled single handedly to achieve those positions, they do not strive to promote feminist policies" because they do not want to be disloyal to those who appoint them to such positions (p. 142).

9.3 Conclusion

In this chapter I have explored the strategies the men and women interviewed in this study adopted to cope with the challenges they faced as managers. The women in the study relied on working extra hard, teamwork, family support, use of househelps, separating personal and professional roles

and God in order to cope with the challenges they were facing as managers, academics, wives and mothers. I have argued in this chapter that the strategies adopted by women in this study are not likely to enhance women's participation in university management in Kenya because as Young (1999) warns us:

When participation is taken to imply assimilation, the oppressed person is caught in an irresolvable dilemma: to participate means to accept and adopt an identity one is not and to try and participate means to be reminded by oneself and others of the identity one is (p.165).

In other words, the women interviewed here are participating in university management by accepting and adopting a management career model based on the male norms (work long hours) but at the same time as they try to fit in, they are constantly reminded that they are women who are supposed to spend more time at home with their families. They are 'outsiders within' (See section 8.2.1). For these women to participate in university management they sometimes have to ignore their identity as women in order to fit in (Marshall 1986 and Davies 1995).

The political, socio-cultural context, management structure and appointment and promotion policies and practices (see chapter 2 and 3) in the Kenyan society lead the women to adopt an additional strategy, which is, relying on God to help them overcome the challenges they are facing. The reliance on God by these women appears to suggest lack of agency on their part to push for changes to the status quo.

Chapter 10: Conclusion

10.1 Introduction

Morley (1999) observes that “conclusions to studies are hard to write, as there are often expectations of concrete recommendations demanding immediate action, authoritative findings and monolithic solutions” (p.185). Indeed some of the women interviewed in this study expressed great expectations from this research. When asked how she had felt taking part in the study Kristine from the public university observed that:

Well, I think this is a timely research ... I would want to believe that it is not going to be research for the sake of it... it should yield some information which will come up with a working document... which will benefit incoming women managers (Kristine).

I share Morley’s reservations because the analysis presented in the foregoing chapters has shown that the participation of the women interviewed in university management is quite complex and full of contradictions.

The main purpose of this study is to explore and document the perceptions and experiences of women occupying management positions in Kenyan universities. The main research question that the study sought to answer is:

What are the experiences of women managers in Kenyan universities?

These women’s experiences are explored using the following sub questions:

- How did these women get into management positions?
- What are the perceived challenges and how do they overcome them?
- What are the women’s perceptions of their gender roles and how do these perceptions affect their performance as managers and their career advancement in universities?
- Are women managers’ experiences different from men managers?

The whole research process revolved around the experiences of eight women and eight men managers in one public and one private university. These experiences are analysed and interpreted from a feminist critical policy

analysis perspective. The data was obtained using unstructured multiple interviews, marginal participant observation and document analysis. In addition several informal discussions were held with other university managers, support staff within the two universities and in seminars, workshops and conferences.

In this chapter I summarise the findings from the study according to the sub research questions. I also explore some of the complexities and contradictions characterising these women's experiences as managers as presented in chapters 6-9 of this thesis. Suggestions for the improvement of policy and practice and further research are also given.

10.2 Summary of the findings

How did the women get into management?

Evidence from the study suggests that majority of the women except one got into management positions through appointment by the vice chancellor in their university. In the public university all the women were appointed after acquiring their PhDs and having served in various positions within their departments in acting capacity. It was also found that the women's appointment to management positions in the public university tended to follow the specified criteria (see section 3.3.1). All the women in the public university started from their departments before being promoted to serve in the wider university context. Initially there was some hesitation on the part of some women when the appointments came. This hesitation was attributed to their lack of experience, training and orientation in university management. The women in the private university were also appointed after coordinating a new programme for sometime. It was not necessary to have a PhD in order to be appointed in the private university (see section 3.3.2).

Women in these interviews, especially those from the public university seem to have taken a longer and what is considered the normal route to senior university management than the men. Whereas the women had worked in

their various departments for some time and even had the opportunity to serve in various administrative responsibilities in the department before being appointed to management positions, the men in this study seemed to get into management without having had specific administrative responsibilities in the departments, for example, acting chair of department. The data suggests that the women were appointed after making themselves visible through publishing and researching more than the men and taking on extra responsibilities in acting capacity in the department.

I have argued in the thesis that accessing management positions through appointments especially in the public university disadvantages women. Since the positions are neither advertised nor subjected to competitive interviewing, there is a lot of suspicion and speculation regarding the criterion used to appoint people to senior management. These speculations affect men and women differently. There is a widely held belief that women are appointed because they have sexual relationships with the men who appoint them. Because of these beliefs or assumptions women in management positions are continually struggling to overcome these allegations and to prove that they deserve the appointments. They do this by working extra hard. Also accessing management through appointments sometimes leads to lack of cooperation from colleagues because they tend to think that appointed managers are working for the person who appointed them (see section 7.5).

What are their perceived challenges and how do they overcome them?

The interviewees faced a number of challenges as managers. One of the challenges faced by the women managers in this study was inadequate training/orientation in management. This challenge posed difficulties for the women when they were first appointed (see section 7.2). I have argued in the thesis that inadequate training and orientation disadvantages women because they are initially appointed in acting capacity. This increases their workload, which is another major challenge they faced as managers, as they had to work hard to prove that they are capable.

Another challenge faced by the women in this study was combining personal and professional roles. The challenge is compound by the fact that women in this context bear the burden of most of the domestic responsibilities and the fact that the career model in the universities is based on a male model that ignores the fact that domestic responsibilities affect people's professional lives. As a result of the clear separation of the public and the private spheres in this context these women were often juggling between the personal and the professional roles. They had to make a lot of sacrifices in the private sphere in order to cope with their career advancement and management responsibilities.

The women also faced the challenge of having to work in unsupportive work environment where political interference, bureaucracy and conservatism especially in the public university prevents innovations and material support that is necessary to facilitate the women's performance of their management responsibilities. Another challenge faced by the women was discrimination. The discrimination experienced by the women took various forms ranging from open hostility from men, lack of cooperation, devaluation of their work by male colleagues and sexual harassment. The discrimination resulted mainly from gender stereotypical attitudes prevalent in the society that assume that leadership is mainly a male domain. This discrimination serves to position the women as *outsiders within*.

The women interviewed in this study adopted various strategies to cope with the challenges they were facing. The strategies include working extra hard, teamwork, separating their professional roles from their personal roles, soliciting for help from family, paying for house help and relying on God. The thesis argues that the strategies adopted by the women only serve to marginalize them further as they are not geared towards questioning the policies and practices in the universities that disadvantage them because they are women.

What are the women's perceptions of gender roles and how do these perceptions affect their performance as managers and career advancement?

Data from the study suggests that women and men in this context perceive gender roles as static. These women plan their career development along their perceived roles as mothers and wives. They wish to retain them in spite of the changing times. The perceptions of the women reflect the society's views and this has implications for women's participation in university management especially in terms of pursuing further training to increase their promotion opportunities or rising to senior management. These women are likely to continue to occupy junior management and academic positions because most of the opportunities for career advancement are offered outside the country and far from their homes and families.

Are women managers' experiences different from men managers?

The feminist critical analysis used in this study to analyse the women's and men's experiences revealed that their experiences are different in more ways than one. These differences are reflected in how they got into management, the challenges they faced or are facing as managers, the kind of support they get and where they get it from. These differences may not be apparent when the men and women managers' experiences are taken for granted.

10.3 Complexities and Contradictions

These women's experiences as managers are complex and full of contradictions. In this section I examine some of these complexities and contradictions in relation to the main findings outlined above.

Ascension into management positions

The first complexity and contradiction characterising these women's experiences as managers is on how they ascended into management positions. As indicated in the previous section most of the women and men in this study except one (Edna) ascended into their management positions

through appointment by the vice chancellors. Most of the management positions these women occupied were therefore not publicly advertised nor subjected to a competitive interviewing process. The appointment procedures and practices were not quite clear to the managers interviewed and even to some of the academic staff especially in the public university. This was revealed by the suspicion, allegations and speculations expressed by some managers and academic staff regarding the criterion used to appoint some of the men and women into senior management.

Some managers in this study speculated that factors such as tribalism, political patronage and religious commitment (in the private university) influenced the appointment and promotion of university managers. The speculations and suspicions regarding the criteria used to appoint university managers affected the men and women interviewed differently. There was a tendency to assume that some of the men were appointed due to tribalism or political patronage whereas for the women it was often assumed that their appointment was influenced by their sexual relationships with the men appointing them. These suspicions appeared to be questioning the women's intellectual and leadership ability. They ignored these women's academic qualifications and instead emphasised their sexuality. On the other hand the women believed that they had been appointed and promoted on merit or because they had proved that they were capable managers after serving in acting positions for sometime (see section 6.2). Again it appears that some men in senior management positions expected some of these women to give in to their sexual demands in order to advance their academic career (e.g get a PhD) and gain promotion to the next rank. When some of these women failed to respond to these sexual demands by senior men managers they were penalised by being given heavy teaching loads and stagnating in one academic rank (see Sofia's experience with her PhD supervisor in section 6.2).

Appointments or promotion of university managers based on political patronage or tribalism especially in the public university also put these women at a disadvantage in this political context where appointment are

given to appease political and tribal allies. It would appear that the vice chancellors or the chancellors appointing university managers in this context used their discretion and powers. This practice of making appointments in organisations has been found to disadvantage women (Sagaria and Johnsrud 1992 and Martin 1996). Sagaria and Johnsrud (1992) point out that promotion and appointment practices that protect internal candidates from external competition disadvantages women and minorities because few women occupy positions within institutions from which they can be promoted. Martin (1996) adds that the selection and appointments of managers in organisations may appear to be gender neutral but because the “men appointing use their own discretion and power these appointments reproduce men’s dominance, assert men’s rights to the best jobs and positions and in the process women are disadvantaged” (p.188). This is likely to be the case in this context where the political framework and the tribal customs and traditions are not supportive of gender equality. Some qualified women are likely to be left out in appointments based on political patronage and tribal affiliation (see section 2.3.3).

The other complexity and contradiction related to the women’s ascension into management positions is in the requirements for promotions or appointment into management positions. The stated criteria for academic promotion and appointment into management in the public university specify that one cannot be promoted to the rank of senior lecturer for example, before they obtain a PhD. These criteria were strictly followed in relation to the women interviewed in the public university and yet there was no support machinery to facilitate these women’s acquisition of the PhDs. These women were expected to solicit for funds to support their doctoral studies and at the same time some of the funding bodies discriminate against women because of their gender roles (see Christine’s experience in section 6.2). Again the public university seemed to lack clear policy guidelines on the duration the PhD should take and on supervision of PhDs. As a result, some of the women interviewed who opted to study locally due to their family responsibilities, took up to ten years to complete their PhDs and were in most cases at the mercy of their supervisors.

Again the women were expected to carry on with their teaching and other responsibilities (personal and professional) as they conducted their doctoral research. In fact some of the women were given heavier teaching loads as they were studying for their PhDs. These women remained in the same academic rank as long as it took them to complete their PhDs (see Sofia, Natasha and Edna's experience in section 6.2). However, some of the men in the public university were promoted without PhDs to senior academic ranks and therefore into management positions (see Arnold's and Gordon's experience in section 6.2). It appears that double standards were used to promote men and women in the public university.

Although a PhD was not a requirement for the appointment of managers in the private university, it played an important role in academic promotion. Most of the managers in the private university who did not have a PhD were at the rank of lecturer and would not be promoted to the next rank without the PhD. The private university did not appear to support the managers in their acquisition of PhDs. These managers were expected to find their own time and resources for their academic career advancement (see Ian's and Arnold's experience in 7.3 and Eunice and Connex's experience in 9.2.1)

With regard to the requirements for appointment it appears that these men and women accessed management positions on different terms and conditions. The women appear to have been under more scrutiny especially in the public university by being required to meet the specified criteria and then being appointed to acting positions before being confirmed. Feminist critical analysis has revealed that the use of double standards by employers as it appears to be the case in these women manager's experiences, leads to a construction and maintenance of a gendered labour market (Martin 1996, Twombly 2000, Gregory 2003 and Gaskell et al 2004).

Combining personal and professional roles

Another complexity and contradiction faced by these women was in the area of combining personal and professional roles. The women interviewed in this study work in a society that expects them to separate their personal and professional roles. This expectation appears to suggest that these women were supposed to maintain two different identities (wife/ mother and manager). This is because in spite of their seniority in the public sphere, that is, being university managers (e.g. vice chancellor), when they go home they are expected to leave their public status behind and perform all the gender roles expected of them as wives and mothers (see section 8.3). Again, when they come to the office they were supposed to leave their domestic responsibilities behind. On the other hand some of the men these women worked with used their perceptions of the women's traditional gender roles to resist the women's leadership or to position them as outsiders (see Sofia's and Edna's experience in section 8.2.1).

The data obtained in this study, however, suggested that the clear separation between the personal (private) and professional (public) roles was not possible for some of the women. This is because the busy schedules during office hours forced these women to find their own time to prepare for their teaching, do research and publish their work. Most of these activities were carried out in the evenings and during weekends (see section 9.2.1). It appears that these women were expected to work round the clock to be able to cope with their personal and professional responsibilities. A contradiction arose for these women because the university policy framework did not recognise the domestic and personal responsibilities of these women as mothers and wives during promotions. The university also expected these women to put in as many hours as the men, in order to show their commitment (see sections 6.4, 7.3 and 9.2.1). Tierney and Bensimon (2000,) point out that the "structured absence" of the personal sphere in the professional lives of women disadvantages them especially when they have the demands of young children (p.319).

Socio-cultural values versus Professional expectations.

Aisenberg and Harrington (1988) identify the conflict between the socio-cultural expectations and the professional/public expectations as the primary point of tension for professional women as they try to negotiate the rules that govern academic careers and attempt to find a voice in the academy. The women in these interviews were experiencing this tension in more ways than one.

The socio-cultural context in which these women worked is complex and full of contradictions as well. This context was one influenced by tribal customs and traditions governing what the roles of women and men should be. For example, most tribal customs stipulate that women should get married at an earlier age and bear and bring up children. Marriage and childbearing and rearing are considered a primary responsibility for women in this culture (see section 2.3.1 and 2.3.3). Because of these cultural expectations these women were found to plan their career and management responsibilities around their gender role (see section 8.3). A *good woman* in this society is defined as one who is married, has children, and performs domestic chores like cooking and washing and who spends more time with the family (children and husband). She is expected to stay married irrespective of whether the husband is responsible or not and even if the marriage is abusive (See sections 7.4 and 8.3).

Women who deviate from this cultural expectation/definition of a *good woman* are considered to be aping foreign culture or at worst to be abnormal. Thus in this context women campaigning for gender equality in the public sphere are considered to be striving to achieve what is considered by many, especially men, to be unachievable in this context and thus people ‘wonder what these women want’ (see Geoffrey’s views in section 8.3). The perceptions of gender roles in the Kenyan society portray a society that wants to participate in the modern economic sector but at the same time retain its traditional culture in as far as gender roles for women are concerned. The contradiction is that men in this context are allowed to ape

the foreign culture without being penalised whereas the women are expected to be the custodians of the cultural heritage (Uma 1997 and Lewinson 2000).

These cultural expectations and values are supported by the political and legal framework, which respects and upholds customary laws in relation to marriage and the status of women (see section 2.3.3). These cultural values and expectations are contradicted by the professional expectations requiring the women to work more hours and spend more time in their offices in order to earn promotion and advance their academic careers. The professional woman, in this context therefore, is expected to put her domestic responsibilities (home) first and at the same time be in the office irrespective of whatever is happening at the home front. The women in these interviews considered these two competing roles as necessary and therefore worked hard to be able to fulfil them (see section 7.4). However, in trying to meet the demands of their professional roles (academics and managers) and personal roles (mothers/ wives) these women had to make sacrifices (work long hours, miss out on family holidays). They had made some compromises on the kind of research they would do. They had also realised that they could only do so much and had resigned themselves to just surviving. Some were just keeping their heads above water. It would appear that the sacrifices that these women had to make are requirements for women who want to participate in university management in Kenya. The contradictions experienced by these women with regard to the socio-cultural and professional expectations raise some questions that may need further investigation. For example:

- How effective can international campaigns for gender equality in the public sphere be in bringing about change in societies like Kenyan where traditional attitudes towards gender roles have remained unchanged?
- Is it possible to attain gender equality in the management of universities in Kenya while gender inequality is the norm rather than the exception in the private sphere or when there is a clear division of labour in the domestic sphere or while there are different

expectations for men and women in the wider society that lead to different parameters for judging men's and women's performances in the public sphere?

- Given the professional demands on these women as revealed by their experiences, is it possible to be a good wife/ mother, good academic and at the same time a good manager as defined in this context?
- How can the university work ethic help foster the work life balance for these women?

Gender discrimination against women managers

The other complexity and contradiction is evident in the discrimination experienced by these women. The women in these interviews were occupying management responsibilities in their universities that entitled them to some respect and authority. But due to the gender stereotypes prevalent in the society and in their universities the men they worked with appeared to be constructing them just as women. The subtle nature of the discrimination in the university made it hard for these women to designate some of the behaviours as discriminatory. These women were only able to designate behaviours as discriminatory when something that frustrated their efforts or hindered their ability to perform their responsibilities happened to them (see Edna's and Sofia's experience in 8.2.1).

The women in this study appeared to think that they had a right to participate in university management by virtue of their management positions but the organisational culture and the men they worked with seemed to be asking them in subtle ways: *you women, what are you doing here?* (See Edna's experience in section 8.3). The absence of institutional support and policies against gender discrimination and sexual harassment made it hard for the women to lodge a formal complaint against the offender. It is possible that some of these gender discriminatory behaviours would easily pass for individual or personal isolated cases targeting women who were either not

good managers or women who ‘asked for it’ as in the case of sexual harassment (see section 8.2.2).

The complexities and contradictions experienced by these women were probably responsible for their preferred coping strategy that is, falling back on their Christian beliefs. The political, socio-cultural and organisational context in which these women found themselves in might have contributed to a sense of lack of agency to push for changes to the status quo. Some of the comments made by some women (see sections 8.2. and 9.2.6) appeared to suggest that gender discrimination had been accepted as way of life which was understood in terms of their religious beliefs. In this context becoming gender sensitive was likely to be counterproductive. So, some of the women in this study had chosen not to pay attention to the fact that they were women occupying management positions as a way of coping with the contradictions. Again, some women observed that women in Kenya were increasingly seeking refuge in churches (Christianity) because ‘they were hurting most and were running away from very violent situations at home’ (see Edna’s views in section 9.2.6). However, this analysis has shown that the Christian principles and teachings that these women rely on are complex and full of contradictions as well.

10.4 Suggestions for the improvement of policy and practice

Although this study set out to explore women’s participation in university management in Kenya, I recognise that due to practical considerations of time, resources and limited space in this thesis, I have not been able through my study to exhaust all issues concerning women’s participation in university management in Kenya. While every effort was made in this study to give credibility to the data produced (see section 5.7) the qualitative nature of the study (small sample) does not allow me to make broad generalisations about all women managers and about all universities in Kenya. Bearing these limitations and the complexities and contradictions identified in the foregoing section in mind the following suggestions for the improvement of policy and practice might be considered:

- There is need to review the appointment and promotion procedures for senior university managers. This study revealed that some of the current procedures disadvantage women. I suggest that the universities (Public and Private) should consider advertising the senior management positions to allow qualified men and women to compete openly for these posts. Open competition and interviewing will go along way in removing the speculation and suspicion characterising the current procedures.
- Inadequate training and orientation was a major challenge faced by the men and women interviewed in this study. I suggest that seminars, workshops and orientation programmes be organised for the newly appointed managers in the universities. These courses can be used to train the new managers in basic management skills such as communication, gender relations, time management, keeping records, writing official letters and public relations. These skills are needed especially in the private university where the personnel is quite small and the managers have to do most of the administrative tasks themselves. Training will change the way in which the managers perceive themselves and give them confidence in their own capacity to be effective leaders. The training should be backed by institutional level legislation and regulation.
- There is need for gender awareness and sensitisation among university staff. This awareness raising campaign should aim at changing the attitudes of men and women academic and support staff towards women in management positions. Guidelines and staff handbooks should be published and distributed widely on campus to sensitise staff on what constitutes gender discriminatory behaviour and why it is wrong.
- The universities should develop policies and legislation on sexual harassment. These policies should be widely publicised on campus and should specify what constitutes sexual harassment and the

procedures for reporting and the penalties for offenders. These policies should also assure confidentiality and anonymity to avoid sexual harassment victims being victimised.

- Men and women managers do not work from equivalent and neutral conditions. The unequal division of labour in the domestic sphere calls for legislation, policies and infrastructure geared towards helping women resolve the tension between the personal and professional roles.

10.5 Contribution of the study

My experience as a manager in a Kenyan university served as the impetus for carrying out this study (see section 1.4). In conducting this study I hoped that I would be able to illuminate some of my experiences and make a contribution to the on going debate on women's participation in university management. Reflecting back on the questions that scholars in this field outside Kenya have asked, for example, Kearney (2000) suggests that research in this area should stop focusing on quantitative aspects (critical mass) of women's participation and seek answers to questions such as:

- Why are attitudes towards gender equity not changing fast enough?
- Why are women prevented from participating fully in decision making in universities? (p.2)

This study has contributed some answers to the above questions from the Kenyan context, in so far as it has found that the social-cultural expectations and the perceptions of gender roles among the interviewed men and women largely influenced the extent to which women were allowed to participate in university management (see chapter 8). A key finding in this study has been that, despite the fact that some women have gained access to university management positions, they have not been fully accepted as partners in decision making in the university. The findings from this study suggest that simply appointing more women into management positions without changes in attitudes is not likely to enhance women's participation in university management.

The study has also identified Postcolonial, African, Christian feminist perspectives that can be used to understand the experiences of women in the African context. It therefore lays the foundation for the development of some of these perspectives, especially, African feminist theory, by women scholars like myself who live and work in Africa. Previously writing on these feminist perspectives has originated from African women living and working in North America and other western countries.

The use of these feminist perspectives this study has shown that gender discrimination in the two universities is hidden in the organisational, political and socio-cultural policies, practices and expectations and day to day interactions that at first glance would appear to have nothing to do with gender. By making gender a fundamental category of analysis this study has been able to reveal the gendered assumptions in the two universities that reinforce gender inequalities and position women as outsiders within.

This research has also added to previous work on women in university management in Kenya but more significantly it has identified some of the complexities and contradictions characterising women manager's experiences. This analysis has, therefore, provided a starting point for the questioning of the policies and practices in relation to women's participation in university management in Kenya.

This research also provided the women managers interviewed an opportunity to reflect on their careers as managers in their universities and on gender issues. When asked how they felt about taking part in this study, some of the women managers said:

This research has provided me with an opportunity to reflect on some of the challenges I am facing as a woman manager (Kristine).

This research has been an eye opener... it has been very educative... The discussions we have had on gender have helped me to learn a lot... The research has helped me understand that when one is talking

about gender, it is not that they are anti-men but that they are just bringing out the issues that affect men and women (Natasha).

I think the interviews have helped me learn a lot... I hadn't look at some of the issues from that perspective [gender] (Edna).

As far as my career as a woman manager and academic in a Kenyan university is concerned, this research has been enriching. Firstly, conducting this research provided me with an opportunity to meet and interact with some women who have been able to rise to management positions in universities in Kenya and other parts of the world. Listening to these women share their success stories and their challenges made me realise that some of them were women with humble beginnings who had worked hard to achieve success in their careers. I was full of admiration for these women who appeared to be happy and content in spite of the many challenges they were facing. I was able to identify with some of their early education and career struggles. This made me feel that our struggles were similar, therefore, I realised that it was possible for me to ascend to the positions occupied by these women. However, I must admit that some of their experiences of discrimination raised fears and resentment in me that made me not to aspire for some of the positions they were holding.

Secondly, in talking, listening and observing the women managers I was able to learn a lot about university management. The seven months of the fieldwork made me feel like I was attending a course on university management skills. Lastly, conducting this study on the eight women and eight men from a feminist perspective increased my awareness of the complexity and contradictions that characterise my career as a woman in higher education. However, there is a sense of frustration on my part because I do not yet understand how to cope with some of the challenges that I will continue to face given the political, socio-cultural and organisational contexts described in this thesis (see section 10.3).

10.6 Conclusion

In this thesis I have shown that women's participation in university management in Kenya is influenced by complex and contradictory discourses. By discourse I am referring to the traditional beliefs, customs and politics in the Kenyan society on the one hand and the policies and practices in the two universities that influence women's participation in university management. Notably, there is the discourse of a successful and good university manager who is expected to cope with heavy workloads by working long hours and attending meetings at short notice. On the other hand there is the discourse of a good wife and mother who performs most of the domestic chores and spends more time with the family. There is also the meritocratic discourse that incorporates gender blindness in the name of fairness that ignores the multiple roles performed by women.

There is the socio-cultural discourse that expects women's gender roles to be retained as part of the cultural heritage even as society moves towards a modern (as opposed to the traditional) globalised economy. The socio-cultural discourse indirectly imposes limitations on women's career choices. For example, these women had to think seriously and sometimes choose between advancing their academic career (studying abroad or taking jobs abroad) and getting married to raise a family. Single women are not respected in this socio-cultural context. There is the political discourse (legal framework) that supports the socio-cultural discourse in so far as it is reluctant to legislate for gender equality and respects customary laws, which disadvantage women. All these discourses serve to marginalise women further and position them as 'outsiders within'. I agree with Alder et al's conclusion that even if women do "enter the fray" and compromise, they are still women, the "other" sex and will be judged as such (1993, p.16). For meaningful change to occur, it is necessary to reform the policies, practices and cultures within the universities that are biased against women rather than simply increasing the number of women in management positions. The negative attitudes towards women in management positions in the Kenyan society also need to change. For these negative attitudes to change within the

universities, a radical change with regard to the perceptions of gender roles for men and women in the wider Kenyan society is required.

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APPENDIX A: INTRODUCTION LETTER

Jane Onsongo

Education and Professional Development
1-19 Torrington Place
London WC1E 6BT

Dear Prof., DR. Mr. Ms.....

My name is Jane Onsongo. I am a research student in the department of Education and Professional Development, University College London. I am conducting a study on “**Managers’ Experiences in Kenyan Universities**”. The focus of my research is to listen to stories of individual men and women who have made it to the top with a view to finding out how they got there, the challenges they face/faced and how they overcame/overcome them and their perceptions of the role of gender in their career advancement.

The purpose of this letter is to request you to share your experience as a manager in a Kenyan university. The interview will last about half an hour. With your permission the interview will be recorded and transcribed. The information obtained from the interview will be strictly confidential and used for the purposes of research only. I intend to start the interviews in January 2004. If you are willing to take part in the interview kindly let me know the date, time and place of your convenience. I look forward to a favourable response from you.

Yours sincerely

Jane Onsongo

APPENDIX B: BACKGROUND INFORMATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Prof., Dr., Ms., Mr.....

Thank you for accepting to take part in this study on Managers' Experiences in Kenyan Universities. Kindly provide me with this personal information.

- a) Name of Institution (optional).....
- b) Position held at the university.....
- c) Number of years/months in current position.....
- d) Number of years in university teaching/administration.....

- e) Other positions held in the past at the university

Position

Number of years

- f) Highest Academic Qualification.....

- g) Age:

25-30 years () 30-35 years () 35-40 years () 40-45 years ()

45- 50 years () 50-55 years () 55-60 years () Over 60 years ()

- h) Marital status

- i) Membership to University Committees/boards/ senate/councils

a)

b)

c)

APPENDIX C: OBSERVATION NOTES GUIDE

Before Interview

- 1) Office:
space
Trappings
Wall paintings/ Posters
- 2) Reception:
Secretary
Good
Dull
Refreshments served
Waiting time
- 3) Organisational atmosphere/ Departmental
Relaxed
Tense
Welcoming
- 4) Number of visits made
- 5) Keeping time
- 6) Missed appointments

During the interview

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Power relationship
- 3) Atmosphere
- 4) Interruptions
Others (specify)

Interventions within the university/department to enhance women's participation

- 1) Presence of equal opportunities policies
- 2) Affirmative action policies

- 3) Special training programme for women/ managers
- 4) Attempts made towards Gender Mainstreaming
- 5) Availability of gender desegregated data within the department.
- 6) Structural support for women (e.g) Daycare centres
- 7) Job distribution within the department (gender equality).
- 8) Organisational structure (team or hierarchy)

Observation of Daily Routine

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7.00 am					
8.00 am					
9.00 am					
10.00 am					
11.00 am					
12.00 Noon					
1.00 pm					
2.00 pm					
3.00 pm					
4.00 pm					
5.00 pm					

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interview Question

I would like you to describe your career history since you started working at the university, telling me the factors that have helped to rise to your current position (as a manager), the challenges you have faced and how you have overcome them. Start wherever you like. Please take the time you need. I'll listen first, I won't interrupt, I will just take some notes for afterwards. You may start now.

Follow up Questions: Semi structured interview schedule

Career advancement experiences

- How did the women get into management positions?
- What are the perceived obstacles/challenges and how are they overcome?
- What choices, have you had to make?
- What are the pressures on you in the current job?
- What is its satisfaction?
- What effect has being a man/woman had if any?

Organisational culture

- How would describe the personal relationship with your boss/ people you manage?
- How would describe the environment you work in? Hostile/supportive/null
- What career development support do you get?
- What barriers to advancement can you foresee?
- Who have been you mentors/Patrons?
- To what extent do you think the structure, culture and climate of the university is supportive to women's needs?

Traditional culture/Personal factors

- Have any factors in your personal life, such as family, made it easier or harder for you to succeed in your career?
- What personal and professional attributes contributed to their success?
- How has the traditional attitudes towards women in leadership affected your career advancement?
- How do you manage to combine the conventional role of a woman with the social expectations of a successful manager?
- What principles and belief systems affect the way you manage?
- What are you doing as a person to enhance the participation of women in university management?
- What advice would you give to young men and women aspiring for university management positions?
- Where has most your support outside the institution come from?

APPENDIX E: APPRECIATION LETTER

Jane Onsongo
Catholic University of Eastern Africa
Department of Education

Nairobi, Kenya

Telephone:

Email:

Date: 27th August 2004

Dear Prof., Dr., Mr., Mrs., Ms.....

RE: Participation in ‘Managers’ Experiences in Kenyan Universities’ Research.

I take this opportunity to thank you most sincerely for the time you took off your busy schedule to participate in the above named research. The experiences you shared with me have given me great insights into my research question and will form a very important part of my doctoral thesis.

I wish you the best of luck in your management and academic career. I look forward to working with you in the near future in other research projects.
Thanks a lot

Yours Faithfully,

Jane Onsongo

APPENDIX F: Status of Universities in Kenya.

Table 7: Status of Universities in Kenya by July 2004

Public Universities	Private Universities		
	Chartered	Registered	Letters of Authority
University of Nairobi	University of Eastern Africa-Baraton.	The East African School of Theology	Kabarak University
Moi University	Catholic University of Eastern Africa	The Kenya Highlands Bible College	Aga Khan University
Kenyatta University	Scott Theological College	Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology	The Kenya Methodist University
Egerton University	United States International University - Africa	Pan African Christian College	
Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology	Africa Nazarene University	St Pauls United Theological College	
Maseno University	Daystar University	Nairobi International School of Theology	
6	6	6	3

Source: Commission for Higher Education 2004

APPENDIX G: Examples of Gender disparities in student enrolment

Table 8: Total student enrolment in public universities 1995-2002

Year	Male	Female	Total	% of Female
1995/96	28,938	11,127	40,065	27.8
1996/97	27,059	10,914	37,973	28.8
1997/98	30,862	12,729	43,591	29.2
1998/99	28,163	12,360	40,523	30.5
1999/2000	28,361	12,924	41,825	30.9
2000/2001	29,033	13,475	42,508	31.7
2001/2002	35,870	17,036	52,906	32.2

Source: Ministry of Education , Science and Technology.

Table 9: Students enrolment in chartered private universities 1997 –2002

Year	Male	Female	Total	% Female
1997/98	1,812	1,834	3,646	50.3
1998/99	2,072	1,816	3,888	46.7
1999/2000	3,149	3,771	6,920	54.5
2000/2001	3,297	3,702	6,999	52.9
2001/2002	3,476	4,163	7,639	54.5

Source: Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

Table 10: Students Enrolment in public universities by selected courses and sex, 1998/99

Course	Male	Female	Total	% Female
Education	8,749	5,289	14,038	37.7
Arts	3,568	1,910	5,478	34.9
Commerce	1,162	506	1,668	30.3
Agriculture	2,530	833	3,363	24.8
Engineering	2,435	244	2,679	9.1
Medicine	729	237	966	24.5
Science	3,677	1000	4,677	21.4
Total	22,850	10,019	32,869	30.5

Source: Ministry of Education Science and Technology

Table 11: Percentage enrolment in Private universities by sex and Courses of study by 1999

University	Business studies		Humanities and social sciences		Science and Technology	
	% Male	% Female	% Male	% Female	% Male	% Female
USIU	51	49	32	68	-	-
CUEA	48	52	37	63	61	39
Daystar	48	52	30	70	-	-
UEAB	54	46	48	52	52	48

Source: Murunga, G. et.al (2003) The Development and Role of Private Universities in Kenya. Unpublished Research Project Sponsored by FORD Foundation.